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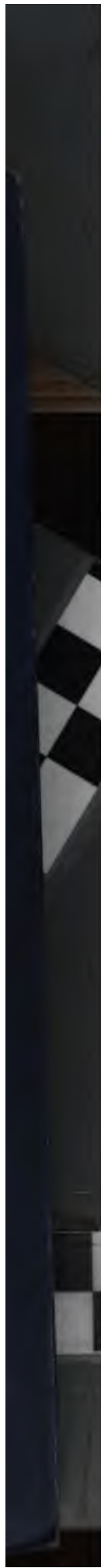
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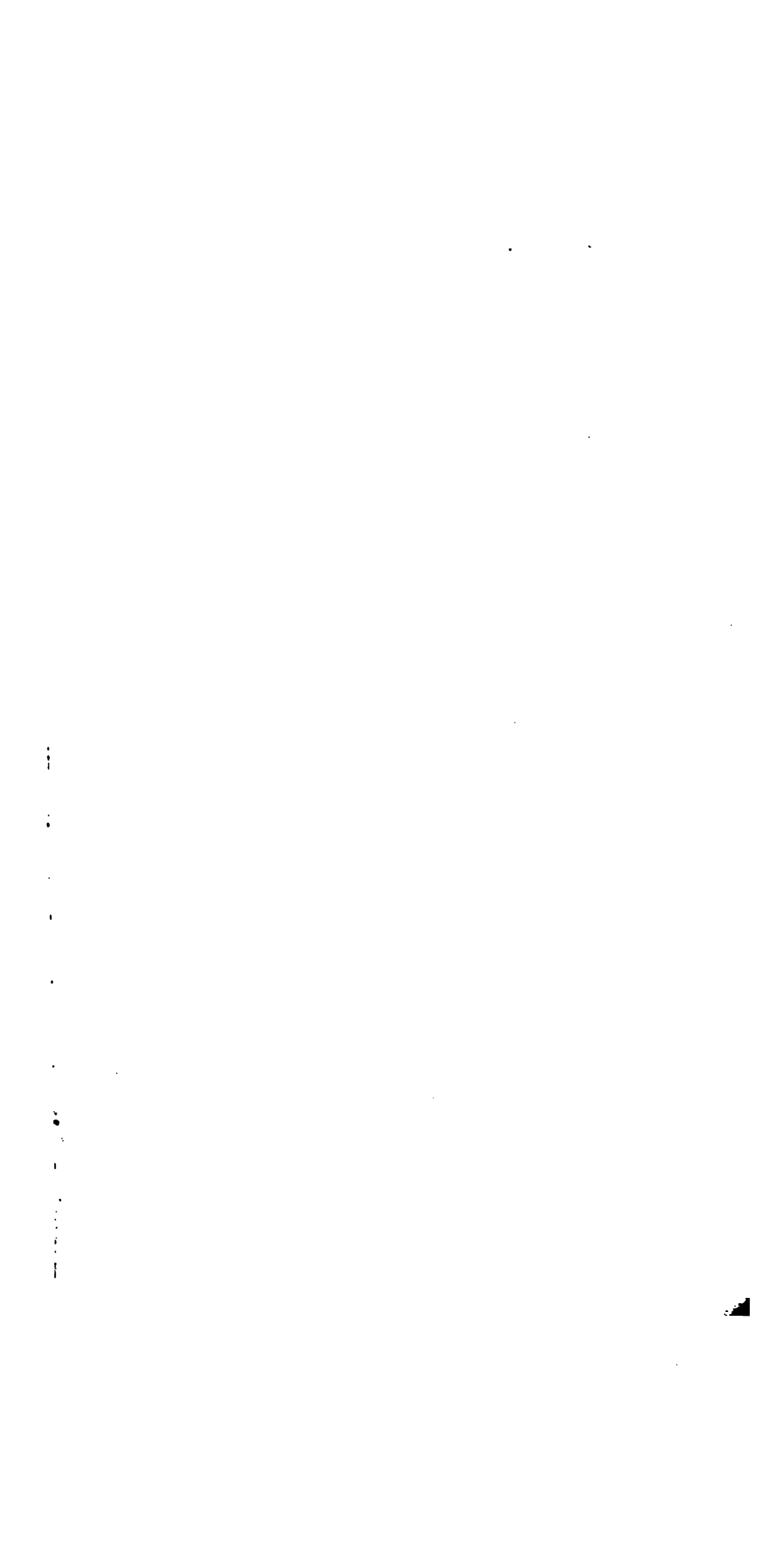


HOOVER INSTITUTION
on War, Revolution, and Peace

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SOUTH AFRICAN TRAITS

2530

SOUTH AFRICAN TRAITS .

BY

THE REV. JAMES MACKINNON
EDINBURGH

SC

EDINBURGH
JAMES GEMMELL, GEORGE IV. BRIDGE

1887

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DEDICATED
TO
PAULINE.

Es trieb mich fort in die Welt hinaus,
Ich zog durch Länder und Meere,
Ich hörte des Ocean's Sturm und Braus,
Ich lauschte in Wüsten-Leere.

Süd Afrika's Sonne küsste mich braun,
Sein Zauber umstrickt' meine Sinne ;
Doch immer zurück nach Deutschland's Gaun,
Zog's mich, zum Lande der Minne.

Am Rhein, in duftiger Sommernacht,
Beim Sang der Nachtigallen,
Da hatt' sie holdselig mich angelacht,
Die minnigste Maid unter allen.

Und trieb es mich fort, so trieb's mich zurück,
Ihr weih' ich was fern ich gefunden ;
Sie theilte des Wanderer's wechselnd Geschick,
Ihr Bild war mit Allem verbunden.

PREFACE.

THIS volume is the result of three and a half years' residence in South Africa. The title sufficiently explains the contents. Besides his own researches, the author is indebted to the works of Lichtenstein, Barrow, Philip, Theal, etc., for the historical facts touched on in the course of the work.

EDINBURGH, *May 1887*.

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SOUTH AFRICAN TRAITS.

CHAPTER I.

DOWN THE ATLANTIC.



It is an animated scene as a great ship prepares to leave a London Dock, bound for some distant land. There is the rattle of the steam winches, the tumbling of cargo and luggage on board, the hurrying about of all kinds of officials,—from the porters and stewards up to the purser and captain,—the crowds of loiterers and passengers' friends, with an expression of face ranging from mere curiosity to intense interest, and lastly, the passengers themselves, of all classes and both sexes—an excited, affected, demonstrative crowd. Presently the general noise and bustle subside, the voices of captain and officers resound, the cables are loosed, the screw begins to revolve, and the great steamer glides from the wharf, with its precious burden, out into the river, all heedless of cheers, and pained glances of farewell, and many a tear and prayer. Iron will not sympathize, and British steamers are made of iron, and so are the hearts of their stern commanders.

Thus the *Dunrobin Castle* glided out of the noise and smoke of London, on a dull afternoon in the month of

August, 1881, bound for the Cape of Good Hope. She was crowded with passengers, who, by the time she had anchored at Gravesend for the night, had got over the first ruffle of the excitement of departure, and had furnished to the quiet observer, who had had nothing to part from on the wharf yonder, and had taken the matter calmly, renewed illustration of the evanescence of human sentiment. Give them a good evening meal, and they look as absorbed as if there were no other experience in the world but the joyous one of choice and abundant eating.

With the morrow came the renewed excitement of a second departure, which again cost a few tears and brought out some other signs of sorrowful sentiment, as we steamed away for Dartmouth, where, after a lively sail down channel, we arrived the next day.

Who has not felt a thrill of pleasant emotion in his soul, when ushered from a choppy sea and threatening clouds into the beautiful natural harbour of Dartmouth—its entrance graced by a venerable ivy-covered church, and guarded by a scarred old castle? The little bay might pass for a Swiss lake, and the peaceful, scattered town, lying snugly at the base of the green hills, reminds one of Montreux or Clarens, with their verdant environs. It is a great contrast to our surroundings of yesterday, in that muddy dock, with gaunt warehouses, screeching engines, and hurrying crowds on every side; but nature is rich in contrasts, and in coincidences too. Hence the thought of Clarens, with a thousand delightful associations, which give living interest to this strange place. To the eye that has seen much and has learned to notice the resemblances of places and things, there is little in this small planet that is unfamiliar. Pleasant memories make old experiences, old friends, old thoughts start up on the slightest provocation, and one feels on familiar ground almost everywhere.

Twenty-four hours were spent at Dartmouth, embarking passengers and waiting for the mails. During this time a high wind had sprung up, causing a very rough sea outside the little bay. The prospect, as we steamed from our quiet moorings towards the open ocean, was thus not very inviting, but attention was for some time diverted from it by a somewhat exciting incident. Just after the last whistle had sounded and the ship had parted from the buoys, it was discovered that two ladies and two gentlemen, who had accompanied their friends on board, had not left the vessel at the required time. Their consternation may be imagined when they felt themselves moving, and perceived that the last boat for the shore was already some distance off. Their attempts to get off only called forth, on the part of the passengers, expressions of mingled amazement and amusement. All such were of course bootless, and they had to wait until the ship had got some distance out, when they were taken off in the pilot's boat. But their transfer, from a big steamer to a small boat in a rough sea, was a difficult task. The waves were so high that the little boat mounted one moment almost to the rail of the vessel, the next sank deep down into the hollow. The sailors lifted one of the ladies, and waiting till the boat came up, dropped her into it. The second lady was seized in like manner and was about to be sent after her companion, but the boat did not rise this time high enough, and the poor woman was held hanging above the furious sea until it was pitched up to the required height. After some parrying and aiming, the gentlemen being tossed in almost heels over head, the little cobble was set adrift, to find its way back through the waves, whilst the screw impelled our good vessel seawards.

The sea became rougher the further we proceeded. Great waves with white crests rolled up to, and often over, us. Sometimes they were flattened out in the surrounding sea,

and appeared to smile a mischievous smile as if they had collided by mistake. But if they left the vessel uninjured, this could not be said of the passengers. One by one a large number of the ladies disappeared, pale and wretched, and many even of the sturdier sex were in no better plight. At six o'clock dinner only a small party gathered round the doctor, and enjoyed the excellent meal. One droll character had an original remedy, which the sufferers, who were made acquainted with it, may have found alleviating. If so, it should be known to the public. "Keep the bowels open," said he, "and read the Scriptures, and you will be all right."

To us who remained well it was a splendid pleasure to let imagination ride on the wings of the wild wind, and be conscious of the full animation of the storm. Burns liked to rove through the woods and by the shore when the tempest was raging, and to him who has this sympathy with the savage strength of nature, the open sea is the place for its exercise. Stand, after night has fallen, and survey the driving clouds and peeping stars, and the widely moved mass around you, and you must be a very pitiable creature if you do not feel devotion of some sort.

We had watched the coast of England until it seemed like a hair and then disappeared. We had turned away, and looked toward the ocean and the future, which should bring it in sight again. On awakening next (Saturday) morning we were in the Bay of Biscay, and remained in it all that day too, as we felt to our cost. It was not at its best, but wild enough to be terrible, and, to weak sailors, very unpleasant. Sunday morning brought us in sight of land again—the coast of Portugal. The weather had become most genial—a warm sun and lovely sea. We did not find Sunday especially irksome, with a service conducted by a clergyman of the Church of England, such a beautiful sea to admire, and with books and fresh thoughts to engage

the mind. One whole day would not have been too long to exhaust all the beautiful impressions, which ever poured in upon us from our environs—rich sky, balmy air, and laughing water. It was no task to be devotional, and our religion embodied both nature and revelation that Sunday. Now and then something would amuse. One of our berth companions was this morning shaving as coolly as on land, enjoying the while the mild whiff of air through the open port-hole, when suddenly a wave, bigger than usual, dashed up against the open window and politely saved him the trouble of washing his face. Its courtesy did not stop there, however, for it discharged itself upon the recumbent figure of our other companion, an old gentleman, still in the embrace of Morpheus, and made a journey to the bath-room unnecessary for one morning. Which favours it did not so generously confer without strong remonstrances and many murmurs of surprise.

It accorded well with our dreamland feeling to stand at the stern in the starlit evening and watch the beautiful display of phosphorus. It seemed like looking at a second firmament, animated with showers of meteors—great balls of coloured flame knocked up to the surface by the screw, and then flattening themselves out for a few seconds, with varied colours, disappearing in the foaming track behind.

Tuesday was passed in the pleasant expectation of seeing Madeira. Towards its close, and about six hours before arrival, we descried through the distant haze something resembling a black shadow cast upon the clouds. On nearer approach, it turned out to be a rocky, mountainous island, thrown abruptly out of the sea, and resembling somewhat the Esterel Mountains, as they rise out of the Mediterranean near Cannes. This is the island of Porto Santo. Fragments of rock, some of considerable size, others of the size of large boulders, rose above the surface of the

surrounding sea, much in the same way as the masses of stone which have fallen from a mountain lie at its base. This formed a very pretty scene. On the largest island there are several small valleys, which produce the grape, orange, and other fruits, and also many kinds of vegetables. Columbus resided for some time here after his marriage, his wife having property in the island. Soon afterwards we caught a glimpse of the revolving light placed on the northern point of the island of Madeira. This passed, we coasted along, for about 15 miles, what seemed a precipitous but well wooded shore, with mountains in the background, when we cast anchor in the bay opposite the town of Funchal. During our approach we were impressed on watching the towering rocks and mountains that looked down upon us from night and mystery,—the silent mass somewhat enlivened by the lights of the farmhouses that twinkled cheerfully from the midst of the trees that appeared to surround them. The lights running round the Bay of Funchal formed a very picturesque crescent, with more irregular ones dotted through the town. They were of different colours, and close on the shore we saw a large number, which by and bye began to move about. We thought at first that they were the lights of carriages, moving along the shore, but soon discovered that they were drawing nearer and nearer to the ship, and so concluded that they must belong to the numerous boats that visit passing vessels with provisions and curiosities of many kinds for sale. On they came, dancing over the waves and bowing gracefully to the spectator,—the combined effect of lights of various colours, and motion, and sound being very charming. Once on deck, their occupants spread their goods about—apples, pears, grapes, bananas, Madeira chairs and sofas, hair watchchains, etc., and commenced business in a very brisk manner, as determined to

make money as an army of soldiers to take a fortress. The method by which they carried on operations was adroit. They first asked double or treble the real price of the article, and then, if any unwillingness was shown on the part of the purchaser to buy at such a price, they gradually but reluctantly came down, disputing with whining protestations that they "hev not got nothin', sir." The noise and confusion could not have been worse on the tower of Babel. Shortly after midnight the order to clear away was given. Down the side of the vessel they scrambled, trying to sell their apples and pears and chairs all the way, and when at length in their boats, still continued to discourse about the cheapness and value of their merchandise, and entreating the passengers to buy. Before the steamer started the notes of their musical jargon had lulled us to sleep.

At daylight we were again on the open, boundless sea, and had to settle down to the monotony of the voyage, without hope of seeing, for ten days, ought to vary the view on eternal water but some passing ship, or a peep at Teneriffe, or a glimpse of Cape Verd. We passed both "the blessed Isle" and Cape Verd at night, and saw but one vessel for about eight days after leaving Madeira, which, with a few rare birds, and several whales, sharks, porpoises, flying fish, etc., was all of solid that our land-accustomed eyes had to amuse themselves with. We had nearly lost belief in the romance of the sea by the end of the fourth day, while the beautiful associations that cluster around the word "land," rose up with a vividness proportionate to our increasing ennui. Perhaps we did now and then think of the interest of these seas, where the first world navigators roamed at will into the mystery ahead, and in later times the rover returned with his spoil from fairyland. But we are so spoiled now-a-days with our

morning newspapers and the variety of modern life, that we are hardly fit to enjoy the old-fashioned ease of voyages long ago. The fever of restlessness, with which the world is now afflicted, follows us even on the calm ocean, when we have anything like a long season of it. Games, novel reading, argument, whist, music, and, by those who are foolish enough, flirting and gambling, are called into requisition to kill time. If you read a novel, it must be something very absorbing. With an effort, we were able to concentrate attention sufficiently to get up the Dutch grammar and read easy Dutch; but we were always ready to toss the subject aside, and yield to the fascination of *Corinne, ou l'Italie*, stretched at full length on deck under the canvass. It needs a Madame de Staël, with her powerful pictures of suffering passion, to engross, when the heat is overpowering and your life narrowed within the limits of a small cabin. Occasionally the great silence of those hot latitudes was broken by some tremendous manifestation of power, slumbering in the atmosphere above. One night, on passing Cape Verd, we witnessed a topical thunder-storm in all its majesty. The sky, far and near, was almost continuously lighted up by sheet lightning, showing distinctly the clouds looming in the distance; whilst now and then streaks of forked lightning were chiselled out, like obelisks thrown confusedly together. The storm was landwards, and the effect magnificent to an eye gazing from the moving ocean. We remembered the storm at the giving of the law on Sinai, and realised better than in a northern clime the full power of the scene,—the fierce bellowing of the thunder, the maddened whizzing of the lightning, the dull cracking of the bursting rocks, the awful voice from eternity, and the terrified appearance of all nature.

The aspect of the sky, for several evenings after this, was suggestive, by way of complete contrast, of the most

delicious calm. All eyes were directed to witness the splendid sunsets. The circle of the sea's surface being much smaller at the equator than further north, the horizon seemed very near. The majestic sun looked like an enormous ball of gold, hung for a moment from the edge of a thin strip of cloud; the next dropped gently into the water. The adjoining space burned like polished brass. The small fragments of cloud looked like molten rocks, the larger masses like rugged mountains ablaze. And then came the gracious moon, changing everything into smiles. The passing patches of cloud seemed wanderers among the stars. It made us linger long after the lights had been put out, to drink in the honeyed beauty around.

There was happily one queer individual on board, who unintentionally helped to break the monotony of the sail from here to St. Helena. The tropical heat seemed to set his theology a working, for although not a cleric, he had taken upon himself the office of preacher. In private conversation he often adopted the preaching tone,—monotonous enough in those still latitudes. The power, or weakness, judged from a different standpoint, of this individual, lay in his exciting, by the oddity of his person, manner, and address, the risible faculty. While talking, or listening to him, you could not help imagining him the victim of all kinds of comic situations. He was a good soul, notwithstanding, and much concerned about our soundness in the faith. One of the chief articles in his creed was the utter depravity of man and American bazaars, for he hailed from Toronto, and over these matters there was plenty of solemn argument. One evening the great subject had occupied attention until far into the night, when our friend wound up in his most solemn mood. Looking around at the gathering mist and shrugging his body, as if attacked by something unpleasant, he said, as if in confidence, and with a

slight air of condescension, "I must go below now, for I have got a cold in my stomach." It only needed the picture of his receding figure to give the finishing touch to the comedy. On another occasion his parting salutation was, "Do you know, sir, how the words unsound doctrine are translated in the revised copy of the New Testament? Unhealthy doctrine, sir, unhealthy. Ah sir, you are unhealthy, you are not sound; you need all these godless doctrines shaken out of you, and God will shake you some day." With this conclusion he concluded that he had settled us, and the preaching tone somewhat subsided.

St. Helena was sighted after twelve days sail from Madeira. It was a pleasant sight, that great mass of barren-looking earth, to our hungering eyes. We anchored on a Sunday morning opposite James' Town, the capital. There was time for a run on shore. The town, which is the residence of the larger portion of the 6000 inhabitants of the island, forms a long stretch of houses, including church, post-office, custom-house, hôtel, etc.,—none of them striking buildings. It is situated in a deep valley, whose steep sides are bare and rocky. Batteries, which are placed on strong positions, and over which waves the British flag, protect it. On the right hand a long stair, called Jacob's ladder, leads up to the higher ground of the island. There is very little level soil except that on the high plateau, which begins shortly after this long climb. Barrenness stares one in the face at every step. We saw no cultivated ground, although a few such spots are to be found on the other side from where we were. Indeed, were it not for its position on the highway to the Cape, it would have remained one of the most solitary, as it is one of the most barren, spots on earth. Many of its inhabitants are now emigrating to the Cape in search of employment, which they easily find as domestic servants. They are

yellowish in colour, and appear to have mingled largely with Europeans.

Its fame is known to the civilised world from its having been the prison, and for a time the tomb, of Napoleon. We did not visit the spot where he was buried—the distance being too great for the time allowed,—but we bought a photograph of it, and talked with those who had been there, and in this way learned that it was very tidily kept, railed off, and planted with flowers. One meets even on the sea a terrible fact occasionally, and here is one indeed. This tomb preaches with powerful emphasis the doctrine of retribution, and reminds one very vividly of the instability of human greatness. Might is right for a time; but, in the long run and eternally, it is the opposite; else wert thou not here. It is melancholy to think of such a fate—one cannot but feel pity at the thought of this mighty genius, whose power lay partly in his omnipotent energy, chained, actionless, and almost companionless, on the top of this arid heap. How for a moment or two, as the wind roars round the rocky height yonder, and the clouds move hurriedly on, laden as with sadness,—like the face of his beautiful sister the Princess Borghese, as she thought of her brother's wretched plight, and resolved to go and tend him with a tender woman's care,—the memory of his mighty presence transforms all the dulness around, and makes everything great with a terrible fascination. His figure rises, as of one, who stormed across the war-convulsed earth, weird and awful as a destroying angel, and when the thought of what came at last breaks in upon our absorption of mind, and we look around again, it seems as if the storm had but passed, and we were viewing the desolation of the after-scene.

Thence to the Cape was a week's distance by steamer, at the rate of speed which the *Dunrobin Castle* had averaged

—about 270 miles a day. She had to struggle with a strong S.E. wind and a rolling sea, and see-sawed frightfully all the time, so that, with every medium of amusement exhausted—even our preaching friend's oddities failed to excite fun any longer—it was with no regret that we awoke next Sunday morning in Table Bay, after a voyage of 26 days from London. The first glimpse of the Dark Continent from Table Bay is very grand—the sea and the sky seeming to sparkle in mutual sympathy; Cape Town reposing before you at the foot of Table Mountain, which rises, a sheer precipice of 3500 feet, almost from the water's edge; the Lion's Rump and Twelve Apostles running out into the sea on the right hand; the Blaauwe Bergen on the left; while away, some twenty miles inland, towering heights rear themselves into the transparent atmosphere, with many a strange combination of ruggedness and sweetness.

Cape Town itself is rather disappointing after this favourable impression of its general environs. From the docks, including a splendid new graving dock, one enters the town proper by a straggling, dirty street, about a quarter of a mile in length, and redolent with the horrid smell of fish, putrifying in the heat. The shore looks horribly untidy and filthy, and the groups of dirty, chattering Malays, who are the chief fishermen, do not improve appearances. The poorer and business parts, running up towards the mountain, make themselves odious to the stranger, owing to the unbearable heat and dust in summer, the mud and dreariness in winter. Besides the Wesleyan Church, the Standard Bank, the New Somerset Hospital, the Railway Station, and the Museum and Library, there are thus far no buildings worth looking at, the most of the houses being plain, dusty, and monotonous, and, in the Malay quarter, miserable hovels, one storey high. Nearer

the mountain are the Gardens—the villa quarter—entered by a magnificent avenue of oaks, on the right side of which are situated the Museum and Botanic Gardens; on the left, the new Houses of Parliament and the Governor's House, the former a grand erection, quite new and built in Grecian style, the latter not more striking in appearance than a farmhouse. The view from this quarter down the gentle slope on the Bay, the trees happily hiding the more repugnant parts of the town, and revealing only the many pretty, gaily coloured villas, has all the charm and variety of a Provençal seaside town. The more opulent inhabitants find here and at the village of Sea Point, on the left of the harbour, a place of residence, as well as at the villa villages of Mowbray, Rondebosch, Wynberg, etc, situated at the back of Table Mountain, and connected by railway with the town.

Cape Town has all the characteristics of a capital, and of a rather bustling town of between 30,000 and 40,000 inhabitants. Being the seat of Government, it is also the centre of Cape Society, whose existence is nourished by the receptions and parties and all the other accompaniments of the miniature court life represented in the Governor's residence. It boasts the possession of a castle (like one in nothing except the name) which is the headquarters of the General Commanding; a fort extending along the shore in front of said castle; and a large barracks where a British regiment is always quartered. It has its newspapers and political parties, its public characters and wise men, its theatre and concerts, its exchange and clubs, where business and gossip jointly thrive. It is well supplied with churches and schools, and besides being the seat of the South African College, is the headquarters of the examining body lately incorporated into the University of the Cape of Good Hope. To sightseers it offers a museum, a botanic garden, a mag-

nificent public library and reading-room, a splendidly equipped observatory, an enormous but wretchedly constructed reservoir, a fine harbour and graving dock, and above all, its incomparable Table Mountain; but even these, were it not for its rank as capital, would not serve to confer on it more interest than that which attaches to a third-class English town. It has, however, a mingled English, Dutch, African, and Oriental look. You observe the energy of the English merchant, the ease of the old Dutch burgher, the merry naïvete of the native Hottentot or Kaffir, the langour and picturesque garb of the Malay tradesman. Both English and Dutch are spoken, the former by the higher, the latter by the lower classes. The harbour and railway station are centres of activity, for Cape Town has no manufactories, and is more a medium of trade between the ocean, on the one hand, and the enormous country behind it, on the other.

The museum and library are contained in the same building. Entering from the Avenue, you walk into a spacious hall, whose lofty sides are one network of bookshelves, all full of good books on a great variety of subjects. In addition to the South African Library proper, containing 40,000 volumes, there is in one of the rooms an invaluable collection of 5000 works, the library of Sir George Grey, once Governor, presented by him to the colony. It includes several hundreds of manuscripts, biblical, theological, classical, and mediæval, some as ancient as the 9th century, and beautifully illuminated. There are also two valuable manuscripts of Dante, several of Petrarch, one of the earliest manuscript copies of the "*Roman de la Rose*," a very old Flemish manuscript of Sir John Mandeville's travels, etc. In addition, there are first original editions of Shakespeare, Spenser, De Foe, etc., and a large number of books printed within the first century after the invention of printing.

The collection of native literature of Africa, Australia, and New Zealand is very complete, uniquely so, we believe. The whole is as valuable to South Africa as any mine of diamonds yet discovered, and it shall yet, as it was the intention of the founder, have much influence upon its future intellectual life.

The Museum collection is mainly representative of South African Zoology, although there are also many specimens of the fauna of other parts of the world. There are 7000 examples of birds, 17,000 of insects, besides several hundreds of reptiles and fishes, respectively, 9000 geological specimens, and a capital show of the weapons and implements of savage tribes.

The Observatory is situated at Mowbray, about two miles out of town. It brings to recollection the names of several great men who visited the Cape for astronomical purposes. La Caille resided here from 1751 till 1783, for the purpose of measuring the arc of the meridian, and established a temporary observatory. Observations were made in 1792 by the astronomers who accompanied Captain Cook in his second voyage round the world, and the mighty Sir John Herschell himself resided in the colony from 1834 to 1838, busying himself in taking advantage of the opportunity, which the brilliant sky afforded him, of scanning the heavenly bodies. To his influence with the home authorities it owes its present equatorial instrument, and other important additions to its fine stock of apparatus. Sir Thomas Maclear, for thirty-six years observer, spread its fame abroad, and his two successors, Mr. Stone and Dr. Gill, the present Astronomer-Royal of the Cape, have worthily kept it up.

From this outlook we could see where the place of our destination, Stellenbosch, lay among the mountains on the other side of the flats that separate Table Mountain from the Hottentot's Holland, and Drakenstein Mountains.

Some twenty miles distant it looked, and we were so anxious to make its acquaintance that our attention refused to be bound any longer to the sights and sounds of Cape Town; and so the afternoon of the first day after our arrival witnessed our journey, at the easy pace of a Cape train, over the said flats to a certain little vale in the bosom of the hills.

CHAPTER II.

THE ATHENS OF SOUTH AFRICA.



THE title of this chapter calls for explanation. It is high sounding and very audacious. We shall, therefore, state at once that the reason of its choice lies in the circumstance that the little town so named,—commonly called Stellenbosch—has great educational fame in the land, and being most beautifully situated, and wearing a look of charming simplicity, one feels inclined to pay it a compliment, and hence the origin in the writer's mind of this presuming designation. Of course it is exaggerated, you will say, but if you had lived there some years, and got into the habit of occasionally flattering the citizens with some honeyed phrase, and had regularly taken an interest in all the little bits of scandal that circulate so regularly up and down Dorp Street and down and up Kirk Street, you would end by doubting it never. At anyrate it was worth while imagining it, just to see the smile of pleasure and the look of importance that the mention of this complimentary title caused to settle down on the good mayor's countenance, and the air of dignity it gave to the dashing secretary of the divisional council. In the eyes of these two worthy officials and their following of grave councillors, the name was scarcely pompous enough, and we only met one dyspeptic individual among the crowds of wise professors and would-be-wise students, the congregations of genial old gossips, and the fair dwellers in the

young ladies' seminaries, that smiled, the first instance in the space of five years, when he heard it. Let us, however, stringently avoid all misrepresentation, and recapitulate the true reason for its being conferred—viz., the educational importance and the sweet, wiselike air of the little city and its surroundings. Other claims it has none. The only traces of sculpture or painting about it are a few weather-beaten gravestones in the old graveyard around the Dutch Kirk, and the modest attempts at ornamenting the whitewashed houses by painting some highly coloured flourishes along the base and up the sides. The days of gods and altars are past, and for South Africa the day of great architecture has not yet dawned. But the sky, the mountains, the sweet glens of Stellenbosch, with the sea not far distant—nothing in old Attica can surpass, and at even, in the moonlight, imagination may be pardoned for raising everything else to a corresponding level. Then, verily, it is Athens improved.

Stellenbosch was not always what it now is. During its quiet existence of something over two-hundred years, it has dozed through different generations, all noted for phlegmatic tendencies, and only recently has it shown inclination to depart from long established usage.—Its founding was on this wise. Simon van der Stell, Governor of the Dutch settlement at the Cape, being engaged towards the end of 1679 in making a tour of inspection through the little colony, found himself at evening in a beautiful valley, through which flowed a refreshing stream. He pitched his tent for the night under the splendid trees, and almost within the shadow of the surrounding high mountains. So charmed was he by the beauty of the place and the fertility of the soil, that he determined to found a village, which should bear his own name and that of his helpmeet, whose name, in her maiden days, was Bosch. Hence the combina-

tion Stell-en-Bosch. From the date of its founding in 1680 to 1683 the number of its inhabitants had so increased that they ventured to send a petition to the Governor, mentioning their spiritual and educational wants, and praying that a school might be erected and a religious service now and then held amongst them. This petition was granted, and in a short time a schoolmaster was located in the village. The frequent visits of the Governor to the school to witness the recital of their lessons by the children, the drill exercises in which all children above nine years of age had to engage, and the annual fair and wappingshaw, held on his Excellency's birthday and graced by his presence, were great events in the primitive village of those days.

The next important event was the settlement, about 1689, of a number of French refugees in and around the village. The planting of the surrounding rich soil with the vine was largely due to their knowledge of vine culture, and they share with the other inhabitants the merit of having laid out those beautiful orchards and gardens, for which it has so long been justly famed. Henceforth the scarcity of events in its history is so great that we have arrived almost at a bound at 1859, and found, in the long interval, scarcely anything worth recording. It was several times almost burned down; was, about the beginning of the present century, occupied by British soldiers in order to check the Dutch army, some distance off; became a great health resort for worn out Indian officers on their way home, and consequently, the scene of much flirting, wooing, and marrying; and was in 1828 selected as the headquarters of the Rhenish mission in South Africa. In 1859, when the Theological Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Church was established here, it began to assume somewhat of its present academical importance.

Then it was found advisable by the fathers of the city to

establish an institution which should provide the preparatory education necessary to enable students to enter the Seminary, and so some years later a gymnasium was founded. This was afterwards raised to the rank of a college, affiliated to the University of the Cape of Good Hope, with a considerable and growing teaching staff. The gymnasium was left as a feeder of the college. Alongside these must be reckoned two Seminaries for the education of young ladies—the Rhenish Institute in connection with the mission society of that name, and Bloemhoff, superintended and equipped, chiefly, by American ladies. Several lower schools, for whites and coloured respectively, complete the list. The latest event of importance in connection with the educational activity of the place was the laying of the foundation-stone of a new college building in 1880, which was held to augur great things, as great things go in that part of the world. We are hereby arrived at the Stellenbosch of to-day—tramping in the wake of some fellow passengers into the market-place yonder.

People seem everywhere to know a stranger, more especially if he is in low spirits; hence the much peering, staring, and whispering by the lounging village folks, and an innumerable multitude of dogs, as we wearily passed along street after street, enquiring the way to the Dutch Reformed Parsonage, where, after a real *Africander* welcome, and a night's rest, we awoke on the following balmy morning.

Everything has a bright appearance—the air pure and light, the sky clear and blue. The mountains first attract attention. They are within a stone's throw—massive, high, rocky, wild, bush-covered in part, and shoot away in great ranges into the sea, about eight miles distant, on the one hand, and away into the interior on the other. They wear a look of solitude and grandeur, nurses of devotion and meditation, and the little setting at their base, in which

Stellenbosch stands, seems just the spot that could fitly have harboured a St Bernard or a St Francis. It is strewn with vineyards, orchards, gardens, and pieces of untilled land, over which flocks of ostriches, horses, sheep, and cattle roam, and irrigated by a noisy mountain torrent, flowing from the dark glen higher up, known as Yonker's Hoek. The village bears but slightly the traces of its two-hundred years antiquity. The houses are built in an old-fashioned style, with mostly thatched roofs. The streets are laid off at right angles, each lined by two rows of beautiful oaks, and watered on either side by little streams. It is a picture of cleanness and neatness, to which the fact that the houses are tastefully painted on the outside, as in Holland, greatly contributes. To sum up, Stellenbosch has an Italian sky, a Swiss landscape, and the features of an English village. The excellent Baron Von Hübner, while on his "Tour through the British Empire," visited it, and expressed himself as charmed with its beauty.

The Theological Seminary first draws attention. It is situated in a beautiful green square, lined with stately oaks, at the top of Dorp Street. In one sense it was very unfortunate to place such a clumsy-looking building as the Seminary in such a sweet spot, for the comparison with nature only serves the more to bring out the clumsiness and patchwork of its architecture. It makes one wish that the mantle of Pericles may soon fall upon some local genius, in order that he may make this lovely place worthy, in respect of its buildings, its mighty mountains and beautiful oaks, where one could well imagine Plato sitting discussing his poetical philosophy, and metamorphose those little groups of students, who saunter about, into reverent disciples. To say truth, however, they have very little of the graceful Greek in their outward appearance. Over the doorway is inscribed in Latin the prayer, "Sun of righteousness, illu-

mine us." On either side of the entrance-hall there is a large and neatly equipped classroom. The library upstairs is well stocked with from five to six thousand volumes on theology, philosophy, and other subjects. The reading-room attached is furnished with the principal periodicals. To-day the Seminary is crowded with a large number of noisy students, who are being enrolled for the next session, and for wild fun and noise will vie with the same number of their fellows in any other part of the world. They are evidently of very mixed nationality, as one would expect in a colony where Dutch, French, German, and English are strangely intermingled; but they all talk the same Dutch patois and seem one in sentiment.

Admission to the Seminary, with a view to entering the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, is by examination. This examination is a very serious affair, judging from the number of subjects embraced in it, and the time over which it extends. The aspirant for entrance has to show a fair knowledge of Latin, Greek, English, Dutch, and the elements of Hebrew, Mathematics, up to and including Trigonometry, Natural Philosophy, Geography—ancient and modern—Sacred History, General History, Logic, and a few other minor subjects. The written examination usually commences on a Monday, and lasts through the whole of that week and until the Tuesday evening of the next, six hours each day, with Saturday and Sunday free. If the applicant's written work has been sustained by the Commission of the Church appointed to examine, he is then summoned to appear for a *viva voce* examination, which may last three days, and if he has then satisfactorily passed, he obtains a Latin Bull admitting him to the Seminary with the title of *Literarum Humaniorum Candidatus*.

The length of attendance, required by the Church from

each student, is four years. The session commences in the beginning of November, and closes in the end of August. The fees payable each year amount to £16, but a reduction to £6 may be obtained under certain conditions. At the beginning of his fourth year the student is examined by the professors on the subjects studied during the previous three, and on passing, obtains the coveted Latin Certificate, which gives him the right to the title of *Theologiae Sacrae Candidatus*. This is an extensive, but not difficult examination. When it was our turn to go up, we were examined in Christian Dogmatics, Jewish Archæology, Hebrew, Church History, Christian Ethics, History of Philosophy, History of Religion, Old Testament Theology, Natural Theology, etc. Each professor takes an afternoon, and on the fourth day there is a public *viva voce* examination, and if your answers have been satisfactory, you depart with your Latin certificate in your pocket, and with the air of a newly fledged theologian. If you meet any of your juniors by the way, you are sure to find them as thoroughly impressed as yourself with your new dignity. During the last year, the candidate must deliver two trial discourses—one in Dutch and one in English—in the Dutch Reformed Church, before a professor and two of his fellow-students as critics, and if his discourses are sustained, and he has fulfilled all the regulations of the institution, he may present himself shortly after the close of his last session before a commission of doctors of the Church to be examined by them previous to receiving license. He is afterwards known as "Propinent," and may then accept a call to a congregation and be ordained—an event which very soon happens, as vacant charges in the Dutch Church have been till recently very numerous.

Each of the three professors gives instruction one hour daily. The course of study mapped out for the four years

is very extensive. Nearly every branch of theology is taught, but owing to the paucity of professors and the number of subjects, instruction is conveyed by means more of text-books than original lectures. Although correct information is doubtless thereby supplied, there is the disadvantage of not having the impetus and freshness of an original treatment of the subjects, which is so necessary if young minds are to be inspired and influenced by contact with the active independent genius of an instructor. This is not the fault of the professors so much as a necessary evil to which they have to submit. The effort that has been made by some enlightened individuals, chiefly by Mr. Neethling, the excellent Dutch minister of Stellenbosch, to increase the staff to five, has not yet met with much sympathy, although it is a very laudable one. For it is simply ridiculous to imagine that three men can teach theology in all its branches, and in a manner fitted to do justice to themselves and their theme. It can only be a new dishing up of the contents of dead text-books, manufactured by learned Germans, with whose personality and genius it is impossible to obtain living connection at second-hand. This drawback excepted, it is astonishing how much work is done, and often well done, within the walls of this unknown school of the prophets. The best theological literature is at least thoroughly discussed, and it cannot be said that the students are brought up in ignorance of the different views, heterodox and orthodox, maintained by the different parties in the theological world. We have heard discussed the works of such arch-heretics as Tiele, Kuenen and Max Müller, the writings of such moderate men as Flint and Van Oostersee, and the tomes of old-school men such as Hodge and Kuyper. It is true that the advanced views are only read and discussed to be rejected, and nothing that is very widely apart from the Heidelberg Catechism is

admitted; still the student can always judge for himself, if he is of an enquiring mind, and has the opportunity of hearing such writers explained. That all negative theories should be anathematised is quite in accordance with the movement in furtherance of which the seminary was founded, viz., the strong opposition of the Dutch Church in South Africa to the modern views which some of its ministers had imbibed when students in Holland. In the opinion of many, this would not be a very commendable reason for establishing a seminary, and they might be apt to say that such a *causa existendi* must give the teaching a rather party colouring, but they no doubt acted in accordance with their Church's Confession and their own sense of right. Its tendency, then, is mainly conservative, but with an honest seeking into the truth of established dogma, which somehow lands in the orthodox positions,—not, remember, simply because they are orthodox, but because the view seems to commend itself most. Why not? There are many yet for whom it is natural so to believe, who cannot move with a feeling of safety until they know whither, and modern theology presents so many contradictory ways that they get a headache and know not which to take. So they think it best to stay at home. We would not despise science. With what delight have we sat at the feet of great scientific theologians, and pondered and wondered! but the fact remains, that with all their worrying over particles and fine guesses, they know, many of them, about as definitely regarding that whereof they treat as that man of America whose notion of the great Western Continent is, that it is an island somewhere in the Atlantic. We remember our confusion at the University of Bonn on becoming acquainted with the various sections of the schools of the prophets—Catholic and Protestant—embraced by its two theological faculties. Upstairs sat a

mild Old Catholic, lecturing to a considerable crowd ; in the next room raged a furious Ultramontane. Downstairs the Protestants held the field, contradicting of course, their neighbours above them. On the one hand, a rabid negationist, almost swearing at anybody who differed from himself ; on the other, a strong evangelical, to whom everything but the strict gospel was heresy ; whilst between them smiled a moderate rationalist, serene in his moderatism, and only tempted occasionally to deal a blow at an enemy.

Another drawback to the proper study of theology here is, that the students have, with some exceptions, had much fewer advantages in the way of preparatory culture than those of great university towns in Europe. The terrible entrance examination notwithstanding, and in spite of hard work and hunger for knowledge which many manifest, there is frequently but a smattering of a subject within their grasp. Many lament over a half knowledge, and some seem altogether without star or compass, and are drifting they know not whence nor whither. It is a lamentable experience when you are not able to tell your bearings in theology. How they reel through the big volumes, coming crash against the rough rocks of philosophical terms in their outlandish English translated form. Let us do them the credit to say, that towards the end of the four years, there is, in many cases, a notable improvement, so that they begin their work with a better equipment for it than the hordes of half-educated men who swarm from Nonconformist and Episcopal colleges and Seminaries nearer home, which are not by a far way to be compared with this excellent school of learning.

It sustained a great loss through the death, at the end of 1882, of its head Professor, John Murray. Born at Graaf Reynet, South Africa, where his father, a Scotchman, was Dutch minister, he early graduated at Aberdeen University,

and afterwards studied theology at the University of Utrecht. At both Universities he had a distinguished course. Shortly after his arrival in the Colony, he was ordained to the large parish of Burghersdorp, where he diligently laboured till his election to the head professorship in the newly-founded theological Seminary, in 1857. He had found time, while at Burghersdorp, to write several didactic and devotional works for the Dutch people, which are still very highly prized by them. His "*Kinder Bijbel*" and "*Huis Altaar*" have brought the Sunday school and the Church within the reach of many a lonely household in the interior, prevented by distance from assembling on Sundays for public worship. As professor, John Murray had the reputation of being erudite and thorough. He had a comprehensive grasp of the subjects he taught, viz, Hebrew, Old Testament Exegesis, and Christian Dogmatics. His only fault was that his great stores of learning removed him so far from the raw understanding of the student, that he perhaps did not learn so much from him as he would have done from one who stuck to the facts of the text-book and explained them. He lectured and made use of text-books by turns. His lectures, such as his course on the History of Christian Doctrines, were full, but not tedious, and written without the slightest reverence for pure Dutch, but in a vigorous tongue in which Dutch, Latin, and English were roughly blended. Except in the niceties of Exegesis, he did not stop to present his hearers with an array of all the finely disputed points in Dogmatics and other subjects, but bluntly gave what seemed to him to be the truth. In criticism he belonged to the school of our fathers, and one of his last courses of lectures was devoted to a refutation of the Reuss-Graf-Welhausen theory of the date and order of the writings of the Old Testament, as presented by Robertson Smith. In

his chair he was sometimes dour and gruff, yet he was revered and beloved by all the students for his sound judgment and kindly heart. In private no one could have been more amiable than he—the writer remembers many a pleasant evening spent in his house, and his absorbedness of manner was due to a shyness and humility, which were the covering of sterling honesty and mass of character. An amusing example of this is on record. The University of Utrecht had resolved to confer on him the degree of Doctor of Theology, and had deputed certain ministers of the Cape Church to intimate this with all due formality. On the day on which they had arranged to do so, they called at Professor Murray's residence, and looking very important, were ushered into his drawing-room. Dr. Robertson was the spokesman, and expatiated at length on the necessity that the professors of the Seminary should have the degree of Doctor, in order that they might inspire the world with reverence for their learning, and so forth in the same strain, and intimated at length that they had been commissioned by the University of Utrecht to confer on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. This would have been bright news for most men, but humble John Murray gruffly told their reverences that they might trouble themselves to take it or send it back, for he would not accept it, and looked as if the business were at a close. So the deputation had nothing for it but to withdraw, rather shaken by this unexpected rebuff. His successor is Prof. de Vos, who has already given promise of worthily filling the chair.

The genial light of the Seminary is Nicolaas Hofmeyr, professor of Homiletics, New Testament Exegesis, and Church History, and now Principal. He was appointed professor in the same year as John Murray. Although not so learned as the latter, he has been a more attractive and inspiring instructor. He is one of those bright, enthusi-

astic spirits that can only shed life and sunshine around them. He walks up to the platform with the air of a general about to assume command; but when he faces his class you can invariably discover a right human smile beaming from his countenance. A text-book in his hands, however dull, becomes full of stirring, vigorously-expressed truths, and he seems always to teach on the principle that the truth is all-sided, for he displays it under manifold phases and in striking connections. We never had true interest in the history of the 19th century—ecclesiastic and political—until we had the pleasure of hearing him discuss Professor Nippold's handbook on that subject. In his hands, Kurtz's handbook—that giant skeleton which has haunted many a theological student's dreams—is furnished with rich flesh and vigorous-beating heart. Church history is not a string of events and dates, with philosophical explanations; but like a piece of your personal history, about which you may have an enthusiastic interest. In the Exegesis of the New Testament, Professor Hofmeyr is often very acute and always happy. This is a subject the treatment of which does honour to the Seminary. It is one in which it ought to make a good name. Its character is original, practical, and at the same time scholarly. The training of the young men as preachers is part of his work. The students make sketches of sermons by turns, which are read and carefully criticised in the class, give five minutes extempore addresses, and preach written discourses, alternately in English and Dutch. In this way they by and bye reach a good standard of excellence as sermon makers.

Professor Hofmeyr has considerable sympathy with the newer theology of Schleiermacher. To him must be ascribed the merit of pointing out to his students what are in his view the defects of the older school and the

truth in the modern. In this he seems to agree with Van Oostersee, and this healthy spirit of freedom, although it has produced a little grumbling in some quarters, does the atmosphere of the classrooms good. But it is when he is unrestrained by the routine methods of his chair that he is most himself. He devotes a half-hour every Wednesday morning to a semi-devotional, semi-didactic meeting with the students. His short courses on such subjects as, the deeper truths of the spiritual life, the old and the new, the many-sided character of Christ, etc., are always characterised by freshness and earnestness. So struck were some of the professors and students of the University of Utrecht by several of these addresses, which Professor Hofmeyr delivered to them while on a visit in 1884 to Holland and other countries of Europe, that they encouraged him in his plan of publishing them in the form of a little volume, entitled "Tegenstellingen." He is animated by an active religious spirit, which has led him to endeavour to introduce among the good old conservative Dutch, to whom such movements as those of modern revivalists are an abhorrence, a more enthusiastic idea of religious life and work. In this he has encountered considerable opposition, especially when he declared himself some years ago an advocate of Gospel Temperance, and started a Total Abstinence society. He was rather rash in adopting such an extreme course amid a population composed almost wholly of winefarmers, who depended on the produce of their winefarms for the means of livelihood. At all events his efforts met with a perfect hurricane of hostile criticism, and many bitter things were said in papers and at public meetings, which contrasted widely with the former respect and honour paid him by the farmers. Lectures were given by the Professor to prove from Scripture that the wines of Palestine were unfermented, which only fermented the

strife more, the orthodox old farmers arguing that this was a matter for Synodical interference. The excitement gradually cooled somewhat, and we can thank God that the Cape grapes and the Cape wines are as abundant as ever.

I. I. J. Marais is still a young man, but has been almost eight years professor. He is a former student of the Seminary, who, after the completion of his course at Stellenbosch, spent some years at European Universities in the further prosecution of his studies. He has read widely on the subjects in which he gives instruction, viz, Mental and Moral Philosophy, Apologetics, and Natural Theology. He drills his students very diligently, and they perhaps imbibe more information in his class than in those of the others. In teaching he uses largely the Socratic method, and if the student is not lazy or stupid, he cannot but be stirred up to thought by the discussions on the many difficult points raised in the course of daily examination. He has a very fresh course of lectures on the Bible and Science.

During its twenty-six years existence, the Seminary has sent forth a very large band of hard-working ministers, and it has, therefore, fulfilled a great vocation. It does not pretend to be more than a practical training school. It is only on a rare occasion, therefore, that it turns out a theologian. Still it is not too much to say, that it has more influence on the life of the Dutch-speaking people of South Africa, who make a very large proportion of the whole, than many a fairly large European University on the existence of the people within its reach. It is the idol of tens of thousands of Boers who have never seen it, but who delight to spend their evenings catechising a student, who has been to the great seat of learning, and returns to his native village to be for weeks the centre of an admiring, inquisitive group, about "ons Seminarie," as they affection-

ately term it. It has opened up a way by which scores of suitable young men might supply the spiritual needs of the many vacant parishes, and has thus been one of the instruments of bringing the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa into its present flourishing condition. It is unknown in the great world, yet it is as dear to many hearts as schools of fame to their thousands of *alumni*—perhaps more so, for its excellence is apt to be exaggerated by its admirers, because they have seen nothing more excellent. As in all things, so in this—the measure of our experience is apt to be the standard of excellence. Therefore do not stare, when you hear some of these young men speaking as if the Universities of Berlin or Edinburgh were nothing compared with this institution, with its three professors, two class-rooms, and forty students. Innocent ignorance is sometimes charming in a world, where naïvete is so hard to discover.

In the neighbourhood of the Seminary is the Dutch Reformed Church and Parsonage, the former a massive Gothic edifice, recently erected, the latter a neat villa. The minister, the Rev. J. H. Neethling, is one of the chief men of the place. He is a fine genial man, who has borne the burdens of a most laborious life lightly, judging from his right erect, manly appearance. He is an enthusiastic gardener, and is often to be found in the morning, spade in hand, digging or planting in his large, beautiful garden. The educational institutions of Stellenbosch and, in other ways, the whole Dutch Church, are much indebted to his indefatigable labours for their present state of efficiency. He is one of the leaders of the Dutch Synod, and a member of many of its committees. He is rather fond of preaching long sermons in his peculiar untrammelled style, and to be frank, we have sometimes wished, on a stifling summer morning, that either the purgatorial heat or the preacher's

eloquence were diminished. He has strong points—a firm will and untiring perseverance, which manifest themselves very pronouncedly sometimes in the discharge of duty. But no one can be sunnier or racier than he, and he is only surpassed in his virtues by his excellent modest partner.

A little further and the College and Gymnasium come in sight. Until recently the buildings were unspeakably shabby, but now the professors of the College have had accommodation furnished them worthy, in some respects, their dignified selves and their numerous pupils. It cost £10,000, and at one time it looked as if it would take as many years to finish it. Within its walls instruction is given, by five professors, in Classics, Logic and English Literature, Modern Languages and Literature, Chemistry and Experimental Physics, Mathematics and Mathematical Physics. Its students are prepared for such examinations as the Matriculation, B.A., M.A., and Survey Examinations in connection with the University of the Cape of Good Hope, for the entrance examination to the Theological Seminary, or the Medical Preliminary at Edinburgh University. It has lately been recognised by that University as one of the Colleges whose course is counted as a part of the study necessary before taking the first Science Degree. Three of its professors are Scotch—Messrs. MacDonald, Walker, and Thomson—as was likewise one who, till lately, was its brightest light. Professor Gordon, LL.B. was a native of Arbroath district. In his favourite study, Mathematics, he had achieved a high standard, but his personality had also the charm of great variety of knowledge and singular sweetness and kindness of manner. A walk with him in the beautiful environs of Stellenbosch, was like a drink at the fountain of genius. He was ardently beloved by his students, who, after his sudden death, erected a handsome monument over his grave, with an inscription on

it such as few teachers earn. He was too modest to be heard of in this world, except by the privileged few.

It has taken a high place in the examinations for Degrees by the examiners of the University, and is consequently frequented by great numbers of students at all stations in their course. During class hours those who have passed the matriculation examination wear their caps and gowns, so that the little town has quite an academical appearance, and you might then the more easily imagine yourself, as you stroll under the shady oaks, amid the groves of wisdom of the Peripatetics of old.

The two young ladies' Seminaries are rivals, it is to be feared, but both give an excellent training to the daughters of the land. Both are roomy buildings, neatly furnished after the American style. The pupils of Bloemhof, indeed, enjoy the excellent tuition of several American lady teachers from Mount Holyoke. Its great occasion is the closing day of the year's work, when diplomas are presented to those young ladies who have finished their course and passed the prescribed examination. These fair ones, in their graduation dress, are the objects of the reverence and admiration of the boys from the Gymnasium and the students from the College, who fall mightily in love with them—even the sober young divines get entrapped in "an affair"—and look out for the next opportunity to propose. The younger, the more eager.

There are, besides the Gymnasium, under the presidency of Mr. Milne, a lower public school for white children, three schools for coloured children, in connection with the Rhenish, Episcopal, and Wesleyan Churches respectively, and these, together with the jail at the top of Dorp Street, whose bell rings four times a day, to teach the people punctuality, let us suppose, complete the educational equipment of Stellenbosch.

We have made mention of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, which has its seat at Cape Town, but those whose idea of a university is that of a fine building, situated in a beautiful park which swarms with students, would look in vain for such in the capital of the Cape Colony. As far as that is concerned, Stellenbosch might more readily be conceived of as a university town. It is simply an examining body incorporated in 1873 into a university, with power to confer degrees on those who can pass its examinations, which are very hard. In connection with it are a number of affiliated colleges, of which that at Stellenbosch and the South African College at Cape Town are the largest and most prosperous. The others are the Graaf Reynet College, the Gill College at Somerset East, the Diocesan College, Rondebosch, the Grey Institute, Port Elizabeth, St Andrews' College, Grahamstown, and the Bloemfontein College, Orange Free State. All these, as well as the public schools, receive liberal grants from the public chest.

The air of the Athens of South Africa is decidedly pious. In a certain sense it might be called the altar of the Cape, and, to quote old Petronius, a god might be more easily found in it than a man. Public sentiment is rigidly puritanic—there is no escape from it, except in some quiet corner. Nothing but the most insipid amusements are countenanced by the powers that be. Dancing, billiards, whist are branded as dissipation, and indulgence in such worldly affections is sufficient to bring harsh censures by the score down upon the offender's head. It is curious how sour and dull a blind attachment to the old narrow casuistry can make one, even where nature is so enticing to mirth and innocent fun. It is as much as the salvation of your nobler part is worth, according to those who seem to be most minutely acquainted with that matter, should you

touch a card or fling a merry heel. With few concerts and a rather poor public library, not to mention, even in a whisper, the name of theatre,—that abomination of evil, which the valiant watchmen have still kept without the walls,—one is very apt to be laid flat with melancholy and ennui, if he has not a poetical soul, two good legs, and a roaming spirit. Gifted with these, there is enjoyment of a high order to be had in the exploration of many beautiful spots among the mountains and glens around. Simon's Berg, with its magnificent imposing profile, Drakenstein, with its massive mountain piles, Yonker's Hoek, with its gorgeous vegetation, the Hottentot's Holland mountains, with their weird precipices, the many rich winefarms throughout the district, with their hospitable inmates—these furnish never-failing sources of enjoyment, to him who understands how to absorb it.

The academic repose is very marked. From mid-day to mid-afternoon you have it all to yourself, and can sit in the midst of the market-place and meditate as solitarily as in the sand wastes of Namaqualand, since it has become the custom of the villagers, under the soporific influence of good wine, large quantities of mutton, and a fiery summer sun, to give themselves up daily to a three or four hours siesta. In the evening the equilibrium of social life, which such indulgence might soon disturb, and put in its place a general lethargy of body and spirit, is restored by the amiable southern practice of coming together in little groups, in the cool of the summer evening, for the purpose of having a friendly chat on the high stone terrace, called "the stoep," in front of the houses. This regular intercourse is perhaps to blame for a tendency to talk scandal, when other subjects fail, to which those amiable groups sometimes yield; but it is a commendable taste to sit in the midst of a highly coloured nature, with that diamond sky

overhead, often bathed in softest moonlight. Occasionally it wakes up and gets very fussy and excited, notably on the day of the Agricultural and Horticultural Show. The magnificent collection of varied fruits, showy dresses, pretty faces; the sprightly music, bright sky, and gay holiday feeling displayed on the green, overshadowed square in front of the Seminary, make a scene worthy of a Tenier's brush. But it is for one solitary day, and the old routine reigns over all the rest. Besides, we are among dignified professors, who parade the streets in their gowns, and dare not come down in this chapter to describe the small delights of human life, on which, though, so much of our happiness depends, far less busy ourselves with such material subjects as wine farming and brandy distilling, which form its only industries. These hereafter.

CHAPTER III.

STUDENT LIFE.



O go to South Africa with the set purpose of seeking the wisdom of the schools might seem to many a bootless errand. Still, after the information about the Athens of South Africa, afforded in the foregoing chapter, the undertaking will not appear so fruitless, and it must not be forgotten that there is a way of acquiring learning without the help of either book or professor. It is a godsend to a weary brain to escape from big universities and thick, dry tomes to the novel scenes of a far distant shore, where sky and scenery cannot fail to attract and teach, and where one is more easily led to shun hard reasonings and to give oneself up to contemplation of self, nature, and Deity. For a considerable period, therefore, we shunned formal study and laid ourselves open to the fresh impressions of such new circumstances. With what curiosity did we gaze on the new heavens and the new earth! How eagerly scan the sky for the Southern Cross! How the southern aspect of the great mountains and plains struck us, luxuriating in the early summer with rarest varieties of flowers and fruits! What interest did the budding vineyards and orchards excite! And the hideous features of the bastard Hottentot, and the fine physique of the Dutch farmers, and the many languages,—what a field for observation! Three months of such pleasureable interest is worth as many years of cramming for degrees,

and what a contrast between their unconscious educative influence and the headaches and worry that accompany the other! But we had soon to settle down to the more formal student life, such as it is in South Africa.

The embryo South African student is in most cases to be found on some interior farm, spending a healthy rustic life in the performance of the various farm duties. He has imbibed the elements of learning at some district school, or from some wandering tutor—maybe a drunken Hollander,—but scarcely enough to feel even his own ignorance. He has not by a far way reached the standard of the uncouth Scotch lad, in similar circumstances, who,

“ Through Virgil stoutly could hammer,
A book, or it may be twa,
And of Greek, just a taste of the grammar,
To look better than naething ava.”

His whole appearance corresponds; but in addition to the vigour of body, with which his previous free mode of life has furnished him, he may have in him the germ of a powerful mind, high sentiment, and a rich imagination. So the god of learning inspires him with an unquenchable desire to drink of the higher wisdom which, he has heard, is to be found far from his rustic home in that spot which his innocent imagination represents as the centre of the universe. With the love of book knowledge, or the longing to be a minister or doctor in his soul, he cannot be satisfied any longer with the distractions of his present little life. There are sad partings from parents and old associations,—for the young Africander is a home-loving being, and the rough Boer's home is always the refuge of filial love and obedience,—and the journey into the world commences. Often would he turn during its long continuance, but the ox-waggon covers mile after mile over the lonely, melancholy route, and still his resolution, with a struggle, keeps

up. He remembers the tender solicitude of his mother and the solemn exhortations of his sire—good, simple souls—with a most anthropomorphistic belief in Providence, which had been expressed in such a special manner at the family altar before his departure, and which continues to influence him through many a changing scene.

“ An’ O be sure to fear the Lord alway,
An’ mind your duty, duly, morn and night,
Lest in temptation’s path ye gang astray,
Implore His council and assisting might ;
They never sought in vain, that sought the Lord aright.”

The journey lasts, in some cases, a month or six weeks (we speak of the time before railway extension), the waggon serving all that time as kitchen, bedroom, and sitting-room. Its monotony breeds melancholy, and it is therefore no wonder that our would-be student looks the most awkward, down-hearted being possible to imagine on his arrival at Stellenbosch. His gait, his dress, his ideas, his speech will require a lengthy course of shaping and polishing, and the man must have considerable fortitude, who would commence work on such raw material. He must feel in the presence of such a novice of a pupil as the sculptor does in presence of the rude marble; but he has the same hope of satisfaction, after years of teaching have polished the rude mind, as has the men of the mallet, when months of hewing and polishing have produced a beautiful figure. Operations are commenced in the lowest form of the Gymnasium. He passes higher annually, if not stupid, and gradually improves, so that in the space of four or five years he can pass into the College. If apt and diligent, he can get as far as the University Matriculation examination in two year’s more, and other three will get him through the B.A. Examination, when he is quite a young man of wise looks, and talks of choosing a profession. If he wishes to be a doctor

or lawyer, he crosses the sea and studies at Edinburgh or London, and frequently manages to take his own share of the honours; if his calling is the ministry of the Dutch Church, he enters the Seminary, and in four years more goes back to his native hamlet a "Predikant."

We took up our abode in a fine old house, built after the Dutch fashion, the high "stoep" in front, and a courtyard behind, delightfully shaded by splendid oaks. Here we had a nice plain room and three excellent meals a day, with wine and washing, for £50 a year. Our aged hostess was an exceedingly kind old lady, who had been carried off to India in the old days, when worn out officers came thence to the Cape to recover, woo, and wed,—with rather too decided a fondness for dogs and cats, however, to suit a quiet-loving, studious disposition. This circumstance drove us to spend many hours in the beautiful garden attached to the house, where, happily, there was a sexagonal-shaped, conical-roofed summerhouse, called, "the Student's Retreat," which title it obtained from its having been the study of our old landlady's father, for many years Dutch minister of Stellenbosch. It was a very sweet spot—the air perfumed with the mingled scent of roses, violets, and orange blossom, and the ground in front covered with flowers, fruit trees, and vegetables, some of them exclusively African. Behind was a cooling fountain, a grove of almond trees, and then a mountain torrent, swift and noisy, almost within a stone's throw of whose banks the great, precipitous mountains rose. We shall let the reader imagine the magic power with which that soft sky, beaming with sunlight or bathed in the moon's rays; that teaming beauty and variety of vegetable and insect life; that frolicsome stream, humming the strains of a Hiawatha; those mighty mystic peaks, seen through the trees, charmed the senses. It was not perhaps a very favourable place for severe study—

indeed, the climate of South Africa rather tends to dissuade from severe exertion of mind and body. It was difficult to concentrate the mind on the abstract, when the concrete was so full of joyous music and highest poetry. For a long time we were so under the impression of the grand and the lovely around, that the little summerhouse was for us a temple and our study worship, of the contemplative, sentimental sort. There were two facts that were fitted to break our repose, however, and bring us back to a more energetic mode of life. We began attending classes at the Theological Seminary, which compelled a certain amount of hard-grinding, and it so happened that there lived in the same house a man of a philosophic cast of mind, who, although not insensible to the charms of our surroundings, was too much accustomed to them, and too much engrossed in philosophy to mind them much. So ardent a lover of wisdom was he, that it constituted his theme in the most unseasonable of circumstances. We once found him, for instance, sitting undressed on a boulder in the middle of the mountain torrent above mentioned, meditating on the fundamental principle of Thales' system, that water is the chief element of things, and, attracted by the myriads of minnows that swarmed about his toes, on Pythagoras' fundamental doctrine of numbers. He looked so argumentative that you could not help becoming disputatious, although you would have preferred to do so in more decent circumstances. Perhaps it was that we made a capital listener and he, like the Antiquary, loved such. At all events, we had frequently to suffer the infliction of trying desperately to follow out the train of our own thoughts, while seeming to enter into what were often acute discussions, in which our friend delighted. We concluded sometimes that South Africa had produced at least one philosopher, and when we gave a hint to this effect,

received a very flattering phrenological certificate, for he dabbled a little in phrenology, physiology, spiritualism—his ghost experiences had been manifold—mesmerism, electricity, and when he fell in love shortly thereafter, in such poetry as Milton's *Paradise Regained*, and Pollok's *Course of Time*.

What with attending classes, and receiving many visits in our charming retreat, we soon had quite a large acquaintance with the students of the Seminary and the College. We were at first struck with the variety of their names. Many were of Dutch origin, such as, Van Heerden, Van der Merwe, Neethling, Burgers, Van Renen; many were French, such as, Marais, Malan, Marchand, Botha, Celliers, Du Toit, De Villiers; some German, such as, Ahrbeck, Hefer, Meyer; a few Scotch, English, and Irish, such as, Murray, Helm, Ennis. They were a heterogeneous crowd, and by narrow inspection you could discover traces of their different descent,—the cast of mind and form of body betrayed it. But the sameness of life and the want of contact with the world made it heterogeneous only in name. They designated themselves *Africanders*, and from patriotic love of South Africa, considered themselves distinct from their old connections in Europe. In the face of this fact, we could not but ask the question, Of how much value are mere national names? Given different circumstances and a new motive power, and behold we are no longer tied but by the frailest thread, to names, that we may now think nature, and were it not for selfish policy or silly hate, we should have the millennium to-morrow. Men will assimilate because they are human, if they are allowed to be human.

These young men were mostly all strong, manly looking fellows, somewhat old-fashioned in manner, and with scarcely any trace of that polish which comes of mingling in cultured society. They had never had the opportunity,

because their homes had been the interior farm and not the mighty moulding city. Theirs were the easy manners of the farmhouse, toned up with such culture as they had already imbibed. Any other standard of manners was considered inapplicable to the freer life of a colony. Their idea of the great world afar off partook of the same homely, raw colouring. As represented on the stage of their minds, it came forth, the world of some generations back. Yet there was a most ardent desire to have the representation corrected by intercourse with books and men of other lands. Only a few persistently remained the Boer in their notions. To them Europe was the refuge of all crimes and plagues, and their quiet interior home the only place where righteousness could dwell.

There was amongst them an earnest spirit of study. Many had undergone great sacrifices for the sake of mental improvement, and, with most laudable energy, made the most of their few advantages. Of course there were rude minds and empty, mere crammers of facts, and often conceited in their own littleness, who would have been better at the plough—and even there they would have done badly. These had never been thrilled with the true spirit of learning. But choice spirits, in whatever direction their bent lay, there were, who read and thought, and winnowed and garnered as the true student should. Here is our good friend the philosopher, with a fine, open German face, whose zeal for theology threatens to eat him up. How he ponders and disputes and boils over with the fervour of a first love for some newly found truth! Whenever you come within hail, he is at you with a volley of arguments. Down and up the centuries he speeds, investigating, grasping, assimilating, overflowing, until he can believe with certainty and speak with authority. A second has given himself to literature and carries about within him a soul incessantly

seeking to assuage its literary taste. He has yet but a smattering of knowledge of the great spirits that form ideas and sway the thoughts of men. Still he can tell where beauty and strength lie, and can betake himself to scenes in a higher sphere than his little surroundings,—a sphere where thought and feeling are stirred and developed. A third is scientific, and in his presence the rocks speak and the stars give utterance to mathematics. A fourth makes the flowers and the mountains sing sweetly, and it is with him you must walk, would you enjoy the poetry of the surrounding scenery. No society could be barren where such spirits move on its surface. At anyrate, absorbed by them, you could afford to be oblivious to what of superficialism and little-mindedness there might be in your neighbourhood.

As there are very few artistic means of diversion at Stellenbosch, their life outside the classrooms and study, which is their very industrious, has not much that is striking. They play cricket, football, and lawn tennis, take walks with each other, pay visits at each others' rooms, smoke and discuss, walk out the young ladies occasionally, and now and then go riding or picnicing. Of more special standing are the "lolls" at the Professors' houses, the Polyhymnia, the "proef preek," excursions to farms, and the long vacation.

We were approached one day in class by a solemn looking individual, and invited, in the name of the lady of one of the professors, to be present at a "loll." The word, applied to an evening party, brought up rather a funny picture before the imagination, and suggested the thought that people must feast here in Roman fashion; but we were subsequently informed that it meant a simple evening party. Stellenbosch is a very innocent place as far as the fashions are concerned, at least among the male portion of the inhabitants; so we all appeared in plain, badly-shaped

black frockcoats, as if met for a funeral. There was a goodly sprinkling of young ladies, showily dressed, who somehow all managed to pack themselves into one corner of the room, whilst the other sex modestly retreated, on entering, into the opposite one. There both parties remained for some time, demurely, awkwardly glancing at each other, and whispering among themselves. Nobody seemed inclined to stir to save his life, and remained as subdued as a child asleep in its cradle, until the room had so filled up that there was no space left to separate the two groups, and intercourse gradually came of itself. You would argue, from these signs, that those young men and maidens must be very innocent of anything like flirtation. But you never came to a less correct conclusion. All this is mere nervous sheepishness. Their hearts are throbbing at a very considerable temperature, and as for flirting, they have given that art a very considerable amount of attention anyhow. Wait until the social glow is kindled, and then these dumb lips and downcast eyes will tell a very different tale. Flirting is one of the characteristics of the South African youth of both sexes, and Stellenbosch is especially famed for the active part it plays. There is a manifest sensibility to the existence of a fair face and an irresistible eagerness to pay it some attention; likewise a proneness on both sides to empty chatter about the tender passion, which, if it does not savour of levity of manner, shows considerable want of tone of mind. Early engagements, resulting in broken engagements, are frequent, and no little disgrace falls upon the student name in consequence. As a further result, scandalmonging is a very thriving avocation.

There is a scarcity of events in such a quiet place that makes talking very difficult. The merest commonplaces will do for a beginning, but when one desires to launch

out into the wider world of thought and action, it is hard work. Except in a few cases, for there are some very bright spirits, the responses become fewer and fainter, until the discourse becomes a sort of improvisation. Of course, the fault lay with yourself as much as with your neighbour, for you ought to have struck the right key! But when the dining-room was reached the sight of the good things with which the table was loaded seemed to make everyone more talkative. Of these, the most worthy of remark was the abundance of choice fruits from the famous gardens of Stellenbosch—an abundance which in some northern lands not even the wealthiest could every day afford, while here it is a common repast. On adjourning to the drawing-room we were all in a more social mood, and there was some zest in the music, games, recitations, and conversation, which passed the rest of the evening. Some of the instrumental and vocal performances of the young ladies were exceedingly good, the amount of musical talent among young Afrianders being creditably large. They have no national song to speak of, and therefore borrow largely from Germany and England. Of household games there was a considerable variety, and some might claim to be diverting if not repeated too frequently. All the more worldly amusements are banished from the more correct social spheres. With 12 o'clock, by which hour there was general merriment and good feeling abroad, came the signal to depart; and then every young gentleman gloriously marches forth with a young lady on his arm, exceedingly confidential now, and taking the longest way home they can think of. The reader need not be told that a stroll at that witching hour in that soft climate is somewhat sentimental. May the next loll soon bring a return of it!

The Polyhymnia,—a very imposing name to confer on

the meek debating society connected with the Theological Seminary,—was held every Thursday evening. The work, carried on for two consecutive evenings in Dutch and two in English, consisted of orations, recitations, debates, readings, improvisations, criticisms, and the reading of a fortnightly journal. The chief characteristic of the Polyhymnia was the disorderliness of its proceedings. Hardly a sitting passed without the occurrence of “a scene.” The secretary has made a mistake in the noting of the minutes, and must retract. He refuses; is impeached; defends himself energetically; is laughed at for his pains, and, in high indignation, throws up his post and leaves the room. A member has committed some misdemeanour which has brought the student name into public ridicule. A letter is sent to the journal reflecting on this unlucky individual. He resents the insinuation. A committee is appointed to make investigation. They bring out a report. The whole assembly becomes rhapsodically excited, and half-a-score of harangues are belched forth in interminable babble. The tragedy heightens—groaning, screeching, scratching, cheering—and we flee as if from an infernal place. *Rabies Theologorum!* A student has been in love for three years, but has managed to get out of it at the end of that period. The whole country-side of the fair execrate him, and look askance at his brethren. This touches them sorely. It is a case for enquiry. A committee goes to condole with the broken-hearted young lady and sympathetically elicit particulars. They draw up an indictment. He must confess, but wont. He weeps. His accusers whimper. It is like the voice of many waters; but we run away before it threatens assassination. A very pugnacious individual is nothing if not critical. He is never satisfied with the previous meeting, and has always a motion to make after the chair is taken. The president knows what it means, and

orders him to sit down. He assumes the offensive. A general *mêlée*, from which he emerges, minus his coat-tails. The whole building shakes, and the good citizens imagine themselves in the throes of an earthquake. Such is the Polyhymnia tragically considered. On a rare occasion there is calm, and the programme of work is peacefully proceeded with. Then comes the comic. Somebody must improvise; makes a brave commencement, but cannot get beyond that point; tries again and again, but finally sticks hopelessly, and then stands sheepishly surveying his finger-nails,—an ass in the midst of its tormentors,—for the rest of the prescribed time. A criticism next, in which the critic shows that he could well apply to his own remarks what he deems sound advice for the other. A debate, with a great deal of rather stale talk expended on the subject, but rarely one argument tending to excite decision, and yet the debater with the fewest arguments gets the great majority of votes. Noise is the only recommendation. If such you love, and understand how to be both odd and odious in argument and criticism, remember Thursday evening. There are two occasions yearly, however, when the members come with the intention of being funny, and when there is really something good both to eat and to amuse; that is, when the first year's students are to be, at the commencement of their second year, emancipated from their condition as freshmen, and when the last year's students say farewell to their comrades with a parting feast.

The "Proef Preek" is a great event. Every theological student is required by the law of the Dutch Reformed Church to preach two trial sermons, one in English and one in Dutch, in the large Dutch Church, before the termination of his last year. It is then that the budding theologian makes his *debut* as a preacher, and his aim is usually to appear as eloquent and learned as he can. Choosing a

theme, he ransacks all the books in the library for fine quotations and original ideas; to these he adds his own weighty reflections, and, cramming all home in great style, prepares to fire from the pulpit his tremendous charge. This process reminds one of that which often precedes an appearance at a Scotch preaching match—pardon, for revealing the secrets of the trade. Our subject for a “proef preek” was the proposition that God is love. In order to make a great reputation—oh, it was a great thought that you were at the mercy of the opinion of the old ladies of Stellenbosch!—we ransacked most diligently, for the space of three months, the fathers, the schoolmen, and the modern commentators (they are all in the library yonder) for great thoughts, and at length had amassed a treatise so heavy with metaphysics that we could hardly bear it to the pulpit. For we need not say that, to the impartial investigator, there is as much philosophy as sentiment in love. Alas for the demonstration of this to the European public! our treatise was lost to the world in the hands of a careless German professor, who lighted his pipe with the subtlest part of it.

He sends forth neat invitation cards, requesting your attendance, and on the great day the church is fairly filled with his friends and admirers. A professor and two students sit near the pulpit to criticise him, and when he at last appears, with quite a kingly look, all the fair sex perfectly dote on his word. At first he is modest, but as he ascends high above your head among the quotations and ideas, his expression is very significant, his voice begins to thunder, and the building to shake with his vehemence. What screams, what thumps, what raptures, as Aquinas, Aristotle, or perhaps Socrates float before his imagination! When he has thus succeeded in impressing you with the vastness of his own greatness as theologian and preacher,

he ends by softly repeating the Lord's prayer, which, however, he cannot say correctly, and then he descends to be handled by the professor and two critics, while the people go away with wise looks and nods, as if a prophet had arisen in Israel. The official judgment passed, he then meets his fellow students at his rooms, and treats them to coffee, cake, and fruit. This is the part that these gentlemen have been waiting for, as it is characterised not only by good eating, but by right kindly hilarity. When you next meet his reverence on the street, he wears a wide-awake and assumes something of the air of a public man, delighted to patronise his inferiors. It takes some weeks to erase the constant consciousness of the great day from his imagination and memory, and then you may venture to speak familiarly.


There was one old worthy, without whose presence the "proof preek" would decidedly not have been a success—a benevolent-looking old gentleman, short and rather portly of figure, whose surname was Jacob. He was full of energy, with a slight suspicion of his own importance. He was accounted a pillar of the Africander Bond and the Dutch Church, which he visited regularly three times a Sunday, reprimanding very demonstratively on his way thither all whom he found going in the opposite direction. He was a farmer by profession, but one might have mistaken him for a minister, as he ever delighted to stalk about in the deft habit of an elder. Everybody knew when he observed the solemn tall hat and black coat moving up the street, to put on a pious expression and get some remarks ready upon the latest discoveries of popular theology, made in yesterday's prayer-meeting. On he passes, rejoicing with thankful heart that the flock are so industriously preparing for the heavenly pastures. Unfortunately we neglected a long-established practice one Sunday

afternoon, which was, that when Jacob appeared on the street, below where we lived, we scampered out of sight till he had passed. On this particular Sunday we were not so watchful, but were lounging, book in hand, on a bench in the open air in view of the street, showing neither pious mood nor inclination to go to church, when, behold the awful apparition of Jacob standing, with staff raised in the air, and staring at us with a most extinguishing glance of indignation. Such an outburst followed as we shall not forget to the end of our days. We see him yet, good man, stalking off up the street, his staff over his shoulder, and his body swinging excitedly, as if he were marching onwards after some triumphant contest with the devil. Meeting him the next day at a marriage, he was, thanks to his weak memory, as serene as the sun emerged from a dark cloud, and jocularly remarked that he had still an "Afrikaansche meisje" for us. He was an eccentric being, especially in church, where he occupied a most noticeable position, whence he could observe the demeanour of all. No doubt many accounted it a mercy that he was a little shortsighted, especially the younger members of both sexes, who often took this opportunity of revealing secrets to each other by glance and expression. Now it was the inattention of the beadle, whose notice he wished in the midst of the service to attract, first by signs, and then by impatiently calling his name, towards some irregularity, such as the misdemeanour of some irreverent dog; now the fainting of some old lady, which worked powerfully on his sentiments; now his indignation at finding his elder's seat preoccupied and his promptly commanding it to be cleared; now his unexpected solemnity and stillness, which ended in sleep and suggested rather funny reflections. At anyrate, Jacob seldom allowed a service to pass without attracting notice to his corner.

Nobody is more welcome at the many beautiful farms in the neighbourhood than a student. The young ladies do so weary in the depressing hot weather, all by themselves, and the old farmer quite burns for a political or theological chat. A walk thither is accordingly a very favourite recreation. There is a very large choice at our disposal. We could go to Cloetesdale, Inhoek, Schoon Gezight, Banhoek, Nooitgedacht, Elsinburg, Klapmuts, or any other of the countless beautiful farms in the district. We should be sure of kind treatment by the hospitable inmates of them all. Let us go to-day to the first we have mentioned—Cloetesdale, the residence of Mr. Paul Myburgh. It was a grand winter afternoon as we four took the road over an undulating way, lined with flowers and splendid heaths, at the foot of the magnificent Simon's Berg. This and the other mountains looked rather sombre, but the landscape around was mantled in freshest green. We were consequently in good spirits—one pessimistic member of the party, who trudged moodily along, excepted. The old gentleman was sitting on "the stoep" as we approached, a newspaper, a long staff, and a cup of coffee on the bench beside him, apparently watching some Kaffir servants engaged in the wine-cellar, and shouting orders, as the course of the work required, with expressions of approbation and reproach interjected. Grasping his long staff, he rose and greeted us in a most amiable manner. His benevolent, highly expressive face reminded one strangely of Gladstone, and with a powerful frame, of more than medium height, gave him a striking appearance. And so this is really "the stoep" of an Africander winefarmer's house. How quaint and novel is the look of everything, and how dreamy and calm life must be here. No constraint; ostriches, horses, poultry, cattle, Kaffirs,—all move about as if the old farmer were their best friend, and there were no enmity and no turmoil

in the world. That peaceful sky above must have imprinted on all things below its calm character. Then came to remembrance the lyric picture of Horace, where he sings of that corner of the earth, "which beyond all others smiles on me," and "the friendly vale of Aulon, fertile with Bacchus," etc., or again, where he utters the wish to throw himself carelessly down "under the plane or pine." There is something softly Italian in the glimpse from "the stoep." Hence the thought of Horace. Being ushered into the drawing-room, we were introduced to the lady of the house, her three girls and two sons, in whom refinement was combined with ease of manner, and you felt at once that you were in the presence of people among whom politeness and heartiest hospitality were appreciated and practised. The only embarrassment of introduction was to know which of six hands, all frankly but rather confusedly proffered at the same moment, to shake, and which of six questions, some of them compound, to answer first. Thereupon followed a free conversation, to which the young ladies afforded much sprightliness. Then appeared a coloured servant with coffee, a mark of consideration for visitors invariably shown in South African farmhouses. By this time one of our companions was deep in a political argument with our kindly host about some matter connected with the *Africander Bond*, and the rest of us took advantage of this incident to retire to the tennis-ground. A marked change was already apparent in the bearing of our pessimistic friend. Under the manipulation of one of the young ladies, he had become considerably animated and deigned to smile a little. On went the merry game, at which young folks at the Cape are usually adept players, accompanied with laughter and conversation of the more jocose kind. The lawn was superbly situated beside a grove of magnificent pines, with orchards and vineyards

around, and the great circle of peaked mountains in the background. The view had more charms for us than the game, but our enjoyment of it was presently disturbed by the voice of the old farmer, who had had a set-to at politics to his soul's satisfaction with our disputatious companion, and flattered himself that he had discomfited him. In high spirits, therefore, he shouted an invitation to come and see his wine-cellar. Fortified by a pinch of snuff, we entered the temple of Bacchus, not to worship, but to inspect. But no resolutions could keep us from falling into idolatry in the face of the vigorous pressure of our host that we should taste and be merry. For himself, he had a perfect abhorrence of wine, and never used a drop. And so it came to pass that we not only enjoyed the interesting sight of gazing on the huge casks, which, like so many altars of the god, were placed on supports along the sides of the cellar, but had also the pleasure of comparing their contents—of many sorts and ages. Sweet and dry, strong and mild, old and young—Pontac, Madeira, Haanepoot, Green Grape, Stone Grape, and some of Cloetesdale make—Joubert and Von Moltke—we had to try them all, and we much fear that if the number of ideas was as great as the several kinds to be imbibed, there would have been considerable confusion in the cerebrum as to which was the road home, and what were the stones by the wayside. As we did not wish to see in the old ruin by the way what Tam o' Shanter saw in that of the Auld Kirk o' Alloway, we were careful as to measure and variety. But our friend, the pessimist? His silence and melancholy had gradually been giving way since he entered that drawing-room, but here in the wine-cellar, they could stand it no longer. Now he laughed the loudest and spoke the heartiest, yea, he became for the time a real human being, a brother man, with sympathies that could look beyond his dour self,—chiefly



towards our fair companions! Really wine has a wonderful, humanising power, especially when it is drunk in beer glasses and is strong and of various kinds! With what magic can it change the pessimist into an optimist, scattering the gloomy images of a selfish soul and exciting feelings worthy of a good heart. How often does the body make sport with the soul, which cruelty, self-inflicted, a little good Hermitage can quickly prevent! A visit to a South African wine-cellar, occasionally, would do more than volumes of arguments to vindicate humanity and providence in the eyes of those who make so many dolorous charges against both. As an institution of great excellence, commend to me the German custom of drinking their light wines on purpose to become merry and social. Hence the many poems in celebration of the beautiful liquid and its effects, wholly unlike the dazing or maddening effects of whisky, immoderately imbibed. German "Gemüthlichkeit" may be traced to the slopes of the Rhine!

Refreshments were again presented on re-entering the farm-house, and another hour passed in bright intercourse, with a little music to finish up. The walk back to the village was all the more agreeable for the invitation to pay another visit, which we received on leaving, and the moonlit sky, the magnificent outline of the mountains, the sweet stillness of the dark ravines, the soft note of the Hottentot workman's song, sympathetically witnessed the close of an animated afternoon.

A long vacation is granted to the theological students at the end of August, extending to the beginning of November. This is the time for excursioning on a large scale. Half-a-dozen or more students club together, buy a spring-waggon and team of mules, lay in a store of provisions, and then set off into the far interior. This mode of sightseeing is at first very novel, afterwards it becomes rather tedious; but

it is very healthy, and admirably fitted to make one acquainted with land and people. Adventurous to a certain degree, doubtless, for one has often to sleep in the waggon, on the lonely "veld," at night, running the risk of finding the mules far strayed in the morning, and perhaps losing thereby a day or more in seeking them. Rougher travelling could perhaps hardly be imagined—the track followed being often little better than the unbroken moor—through stony stream beds and deep ravines, where the waggon is nearly perpendicular apparently and about to fall upon the long team. The mules, then, sometimes get entangled and unmanageable, and then it is a case of getting out of the waggon first, and out of the trouble second, according as Providence may permit. If all goes pretty well, that is, if the mules are not lost or killed, and the passengers not disabled or disheartened, as many as twenty villages, at long distances from each other, may be visited, the party being everywhere received with peculiar honour and hospitality, preaching in the vacant churches on Sunday, and for the time being imparting freshness and vivacity to many a solitary inland hamlet. On their return partnership is dissolved, the waggon and mules are sold, and the excursionsists usually find that they have gained a large measure of health, pleasure, and instruction for almost nothing, and have yet spent their vacation in a very original, eventful manner.

For Africander students such a life, as an educational means, though pleasant in its way, is too limited. They cannot attain here the generous, broad views of man and the world which are only obtained by coming much in contact with both in all their respective variety. They are but half-developed, if theirs be compared with the ideal development of which man, as true man, should be conscious. One cannot be here what a truly educated man should be, however much one may grind, for that is not

in books, and the ideas that rule at Stellenbosch are too little—unlike the ideas that rule in nature, whose breadth and freedom man should try to realise in his own sphere. Therefore they must seek in the greater world, if they can, something to make up for the defects here. The change to Europe must create a wonderful revolution in many things if they have candid, enquiring minds. Those who resolve to study medicine are compelled to travel, and many of the others travel from the love of it, and their Stellenbosch training thereby receives its necessary complement. But for a European, tired of the bustle of a busy world, and crammed with the ideas that move modern society, it is very refreshing to take up his abode in this quiet spot, and join in its student life, such as it is. Such a walk to a farm as has been described, to play a merry game or quaff a glass of Haanepoot, the little excitements of the “loll,” the great solemnity of the “proef preek,” the varieties of the vacation—now at a native kraal, now on a lonely farm, now in a busy inland town,—the constant mystery of the great, still mountains and glittering sky, the original figure of old Jacob, the lonely walks in hitherto unexplored bits of scenery, etc., etc.,—these are all rich sources of enjoyment. And then to view the world from a distance, to renew intercourse with it without being in it, and feel all the old interests without their cares! And then to live in memory, to be turned back upon self, and feel less dependent upon mere externals! What a playground for phantasy, that rich nature, when, after the sun has set, the east is so full of impressive influences, that seem almost to have soul and body of the higher sort! Something of dreamland here—let us away again from this round of harsh action—lorry and cab wheels ever grating on the ear—to share in those rare delights, say in the wine season, when the “most” overflows, and the grapes and countless varieties of fruits are proffered without price by nature’s bountiful hand.

CHAPTER IV.

DANIEL GEZANI.



YOU remember how you were struck by the sudden appearance of a black face in the streets of a busy European city. This was especially the case if you saw such a dark countenance for the first time. What pictures of tropical figures, reclining under palm trees, such as used strangely to interest us in our school days, did it recall! How it set us a dreaming of far off Africa, that Continent in which we had such a melancholy interest, because our youthful imaginations were so haunted with the horrors that attended the slave trade, with which it was ever associated. Our black brother there might only be a cook or "boots" in a hotel, but we make him something of a hero, because he recalls the heroes of suffering of our boyish picture-book. But here, where a coloured face is more common than a white one, our dreams have lost much of their charm. Indeed, among Kaffirs and Hottentots it is so seldom that we see a striking face, that we can now mingle among crowds, and be as unconscious of their presence as if moving among our fellows at home. But stay; here are two that have so much of the remarkable about them that they arouse curiosity. The one is that of a certain I——, a Mozambique Kaffir. He is only a labourer, clothed, without much taste, in a labourer's rough garments; but what a fine, powerful figure, open, significant face, contented, gentle eye, and jovial air! His biography may be contained in a single sentence—once a little slave

boy with that fear of men in his young heart which comes of witnessing scenes of murder; then captured from the Arabs by the British, taken to the Cape, brought up by a kind family, and now a stalwart young workman. But little, of a truth,—still, what a difference between the slave boy and the free, fine figure of the man, however humble his vocation and black his skin. Why, there is the germ of a romance, if we like to idealise a little. Could we not make our hero, with such a physique and expression, to be a second Corsair, or something of that sort? But here comes the second,—a very different style of man, and interest settles more worthily on him. It is Daniel Gezani, reader.

One morning, on going to the Seminary, we discovered a strange face, the only black one among the students. This was something very extraordinary, for it had previously appeared to us well nigh impossible that a Kaffir could find entrance there. But a kindlier spirit seemed now to prevail, and this much must be said to the credit of the professors, that they had on one occasion in former years admitted a Hottentot, who had passed the requisite examinations, to attend their lectures, amid much ill-feeling displayed by the Dutch people. It is evident, this morning, from the rather scowling looks that are being shot at the meek stranger, that they have again run much risk of being blamed for unrighteous laxity. Many of these young Afrianders evidently feel insulted, and poor Gezani is allowed to nurture the feeling of isolation on a bench all by himself, for no one will lower his dignity to sit beside him. He is shy, unassuming and somewhat disconcerted; apparently realising that it is only by the grace of Almighty Dutch Afrianderdom that he sits there. Such seemed to be his train of thought, when we had the courage to approach and give him a hearty shake of the hand. In Europe we are still backward enough to hold fast to the

homo sum et nihil humani a me alienum puto doctrine; at least, where a heartless materialism has not taken possession of the mind; and our northern heart could not stand this transgression against the broad sentiment of humanity. This action brought upon us the critical gaze of the classroom. A number gave vent to their dissent in look and whisper. To them, this was equivalent to making a truce with the coloured man, and forgetting the differences of race, which will assert themselves in a land where black and white have fought and wrangled with each other for nigh two-and-a-half centuries. To us, it was an act of Christian courtesy, which good manners alone would have recommended. But good manners seem to vary in their character with locality, and so our action is hardly respectable in the eyes of these. To their credit, be it said, the more intelligent portion seemed to take it as a rebuke, and secretly to approve, although to ask them to give a hand to even an educated Kaffir, is to expect them to stifle prejudices hundreds of years old. This is too much for Africander human nature. Prejudices are like some kinds of weeds—their roots go both very deep and spread far.

Gezani made a very favourable impression as he looked at you with that large, animated eye. He was about medium height, with an elastic, energetic gait. His body was of very harmonious proportions—broad in the chest, and straight as the plumb-line, as most Kaffirs are. He had of course the Kaffir features, but not so pronounced as to make them disagreeably prominent. The nose and lips, for instance, were less heavy and thick than in the common Kaffir, and in addition to two rows of shining teeth, he had quite a profusion of black, curly hair. There was likewise a mildness and intelligence and kindness about the whole face, which made you forget the Kaffir and think of the man.

He belonged to the tribe of the Fingos, a Kaffir clan that had been driven from the banks of the Tugela in the bloody wars of Chaka and had settled in Kaffraria. They were afterwards allotted by the British Government a tract of country known as Fingoland. Christianity spread amongst them through various missionary agencies. Of all South African tribes, they have proved themselves to be the most capable of improvement. They are now prosperous, and have built many schools and churches. Many of the young men have received a good training at industrial and missionary institutions, such as Lovedale, where Gezani, whose father had been a Christian, was also educated. Without question, this is the most excellent missionary institution in South Africa. It is in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, and offers, under the very able leadership of Dr. Stuart, a training in all departments,—elementary and advanced educational, theological, and industrial. It is a marvellous power for good among the coloured tribes of the Eastern Province of Cape Colony. Here, then, our friend had received the first and largest part of his education. Among many unfortunate and disappointing cases, his was an eminently successful one. With the strength of a high moral character to leaven the knowledge which he imbibed, the labour of his teachers had not been wasted on him. While others might leave the institution with characters but imperfectly formed in accordance with Christian principles, and a mere gloss of knowledge over their heathen natures, so that they might easily become a prey to old practices, he was one of the firmer natures which gain by being thus wrought upon. His attainments, when he came to leave it, included a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, great ease in the use of English, some acquaintance with mathematics, and a considerable grasp of theology. He was therefore sent to

Stellenbosch, which afforded the best which South Africa could boast of in the way of higher theological learning. At Lovedale the missionary spirit had come upon him,—he would be a great teacher of Christianity to his fellows, and such travel and further study would fit him all the better for this. Perhaps he might even get as far as Europe—and then he must return an apostle.

As a student, Gezani appeared at great disadvantage. It seemed difficult for his musical organs of speech, so expressive in his native Kaffir, to adapt themselves to the harsher Dutch, and as difficult for his unexercised mind to master philosophical thoughts, dressed in uncouth, strange terms. In fact, like many a young student, who first makes acquaintance with a difficult subject, requiring strong grasp of intellect and extensive reading, he seemed very bewildered at the beginning. It is hard enough for a developed European intellect, to comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance, especially if set forth in heavy Teutonic phrase, let alone that of a Kaffir. We often thought, as we watched the effect of such an effort upon him, how strangely disfigured by words are many truths. Some were better thought, not spoken, when speech only leads deeper into the maze. And certainly our current theological dogmas and dogmatic terms are the last things that we should present to such an understanding, accustomed to think not as a Greek (how many of our theological terms are Greek), but as a Kaffir. We should rather advise him to make a theology of his own, in accordance with his proper mode of thinking, and would gladly accept the same privilege for ourselves, and be free and natural, and not a mere imitation. We felt great sympathy with that puzzled look, as it wandered over the wide arena of theological knowledge, and could make out nothing, because of the strange garment of high sounding terms, in which every

thing was wrapped. There is, in truth, no subject in which we have gone away so far from the simplicity and sweetness of nature as theology; therefore if the tongue stammered in expressing the labours of the mind, we did not marvel. But we learn by hard exercise of this sort, however unpleasant. We may go from beginning to end of Euclid with little appreciation, and little power of application of the abstract to the concrete, but we feel the more braced for the trouble of finding out why this must follow from that. So Gezani gradually improved, both as to the number of facts and the acuteness with which they were put into their places. But if he were to have a scientific grasp, then science, so drearily loaded with hard words, must undergo an overhaul, must manifest a freshness of life so human, that every human being can rejoice in it. We are not to make Kaffirs philosophers and theologians by engrafting new terms into their vocabulary, or making them learn a new language. We shall do it only by exciting their natures to think themselves forth in their own way.

In his little room, which was poor enough (it had a damp earthen floor and shabby furniture), there stood a small library, and here the spirit of the black man seemed to ruminate with more delight. Only it was a pity that his budding mind had been so much overloaded with theology. That never gives much taste for literature as such; it dulls and dries too much. Hence he could wade through such a book as Josephus, while the few poets he had lay still and dusty on the shelves. Surely nobody had directed his spirit in the green pastures of beautiful feeling, sweetly expressed. And that is, nevertheless, so necessary for a preacher. His soul must overflow with feeling, if he would not lie high and dry up in the pulpit yonder, like a hopeless hulk, struck on the sand. There is such a rich vein of beauty in poetry, which, like a lovely face, must attract,

while the misty countenance of philosophy sends asleep. So open thy few poets, good friend, and browse. Then thy Kaffir imagination can roam freely, and be absorbed with impressions which teach more powerfully than all the professors of dry dogma in the universe put together.

We often took long walks among the mountains. His powers of conversation and observation had not been much developed. He noticed things in detail, and indulged more in exclamation than in pregnant remark. But there was a conscious enjoyment of the beautiful scenery around, which discovered the germ of artistic feeling even in a Kaffir. Many would deny them the right to be at all elevated in sentiment; but in this trait of character, exemplified by our friend now, and in their passionate love of music and song, we found grounds of contradiction of such an opinion. Whether savage or civilized, whether manifesting sympathy with nature in the simplest way or expressing our admiration in the form of a Greek rhapsody, we betray that earth is the mother of us all. But the great sphere of interpretation by representation was a stranger to him. He had never seen a Van Dyck; he is both untutored by art and in art, and such primitiveness of view strikes one strangely, fresh from the haunts of a high civilisation. We miss in him that spiritual culture which reaches its highest in art, and enables us to see into the harmonies, the deep significance of things. Children of nature are still in dreamland, although they move so much among real things. To them, that which makes everything alive with thought and spirit is as far off as the dwellers of higher spheres are from us.

A life with only such a walk occasionally to break its monotony, must have been very wearisome. Among those above him there was no chance of companionship. He must ever feel out of his element there, because present on sufferance. To a party he was never invited. The young

ladies would have fainted at the sight of him ; yea, some of those tender-feeling misses even threatened never more to walk home with any young gentleman, who should be guilty of shaking hands with him. This, of course, formed an effectual obstacle to closer fellowship with him on their part, for to be deprived of the privilege of escorting a young lady on such occasions is to lose the delight of flirting, so innate in the nature of the young Africander. This sacrifice none were prepared to make. Therefore, at the silly beck of the fair ones of the town, he must spend his evenings in his cheerless room, all oblivious of the diversions of society, although he had the education and feeling of a gentleman. On a rare occasion grace might be extended, but then no ladies were to be present. It was gravely debated, indeed, whether he should be allowed to be a member of the Theological Debating Society, and by a majority only, this privilege was granted. But let us give them some credit in this—they were doing an unusual thing, and we are all so bound by present public opinion. Few scorn the drudgery of acting according to what a neighbour says, however nonsensical it may be. In this society his eloquence in his own tongue was very marked. Like all Kaffirs, he threw his whole soul into his words, and brought the force of gesticulation, not excited, but strikingly natural, to give emphasis to his discourse. It was a pleasure to listen. There is such a pleasing softness and melancholy about the Kaffir language, that soothe while they absorb. In English he likewise spoke well.

Among those beneath him, the coloured folks of the district, there could be little congenial converse. None were his equal in intelligence and education. Besides, he was a Kaffir, and they were mostly all bastard Hottentots, with Dutch names, and mightily puffed up with their superiority as half-white and full-blown British subjects. So he was

isolated almost as completely as if he had been a castaway on the great ocean. Now and then a kind word of recognition from some one more generous than the rest,—the professors and some of the students,—but from the inhabitants in general, none. So his three years' residence were drawing to an end, and he was full of the prospect of a change, perhaps to Europe to study further, perhaps back to his native tribe, to enter on his work as a Christian teacher,—it was not settled which. So kindly disposed was he towards humanity that, in the circumstances, he considered that he had been well treated at Stellenbosch. He was full of enthusiasm for the spread of Christianity among the dark peoples of South Africa, and delighted to think that he had an apostolic mission to carry out.

To one so enlightened, the state of his countrymen, so low, was a revolting sight. He had realised the inestimable blessings of Christian civilisation, and was impatient to destroy the evils of heathenism, such as polygamy, laziness, low conceptions of life, etc. etc.

And what would he not meet in Europe? What sympathetic appreciation! New scenes, new peoples and customs, kind hearts! The world in reality, in strong action, of which he had made pictures in phantasy in far off repose! Even a Kaffir soul is capable of noble enthusiasm, and may revel in imagination. His joy at the thought of a great future,—great in being useful to the best of his power, which was not little, in our opinion,—was as human and expressive as that of any youth who, in happier circumstances, breathes with ardour in pursuit of a high aim. Certainly his prospects were grand. To move a whole nation by burning eloquence, and, not as other missionaries often try to do, through a clumsy interpreter, to strike right home words, fitted to the character of his hearers,—that Gezani was sure to accomplish. Another Tyo Soga

was about to arise, a Makana in influence, but wielded in nobler, more enduring fashion. And now?—he becomes, amid the soaring of all his hopes, the prey of a fearful malady. That damp floor, the unaccustomed hard study, the want of that free mode of life which to the Kaffir is nature, a bad cold, at first uncared for,—these have played havoc with his athletic constitution and induced consumption. His cough is terribly racking, the look gets wan, and it is, alas! far gone with thee, dear brother. The doctor shakes his head and bids him drink old wine and hope for the best. He rallied, got up, was able to move about in the soft sweet air, and, after a while, to proceed to his own country,—but the enemy was too strong and could not be rooted out. He was ordained to a mission station; worked a month or two, fell ill again, and breathed his last just on the threshold, as we thought, of a great apostolic career.

CHAPTER V.

THE RIVIERA OF THE CAPE.



THE country which we have thus designated extends from Cape Point for about 100 miles in a north-easterly direction into the interior. Its limit there is the Hex River Mountains, which separate it from the Great Karoo, or desert of Cape Colony. It includes all the more fertile and more closely cultivated land for a considerable distance on either side of this line,—from Caledon and Montague on the right, to Malmesbury and Hopefield on the left. Its dimensions are therefore very extended, and, in the sweetness of its sky, the beauty and variety of its landscape, the fertility of its soil, the value of its productions, the quaintness of its villages and farmhouses, it may be said to be a peculiarly favoured spot, not only in South Africa, but in all the earth. The travelled stranger, on first forming acquaintance with it, has a vague impression that there is something Riviera-like in the aspect of things—the sky, the mountains, the vineyards, the orchards, the bright, easy mode of life, etc., reminding him of the South of France.

The scenery is very beautiful. Several ranges of mountains break up the surface. Approaching from the sea, the eye falls upon the great detached chain, commencing with Table Mountain, and running down to the extremity of the Cape Peninsula. This mass has an abrupt, stern appearance, which is slightly modified, however, by the graceful

projections at intervals—twelve in number—known by the name of the Twelve Apostles. In its isolated position, and without grass or wood to hide its rocky sides, it looks like some fearful monster, standing at Africa's furthest point, as guard against the wild seas and fierce hurricanes that constantly hurl themselves against it. In old times it inspired the first navigators with awe ; to-day it strikes the traveller with wonder, even although he has grown accustomed to the magnificence and wildness of the Alps. This outpost passed, there stretches before the eye a broad plain—"the Cape Flats"—bordered on the western side by the subdued heights of the Blaauwe Bergen ; on the east by the great piles of the Hottentot's Holland and Drakenstein Mountains. Climbing the slopes of the latter, the prospect on either side and in front is one of the grandest. On the left, a great stretch of corn-producing land, frequently broken by bush-covered hills. The sides of many of these hills, and the richer part of the flat ground, are covered with vineyards and corn-fields, in the midst of which nestle many a beautiful farmhouse and village. Past these the railway from Cape Town to the interior winds its course. In front are the deep valleys and picturesque Passes of the great mountain masses in the Tulbagh, Ceres, and Worcester districts—quite Alpine in mass and varied grandeur. On the right—east and north-east—are the fertile vales and shaggy hills of Caledon, the Zonder Einde Mountains, and the wine-producing districts of Goudinie, Robertson, and Montague, with Swellendam and Riversdale further on—dotted with beautifully embowered farmhouses. Like the Provence, the whole scene combines the rich blue sky and vine-clad slopes of Italy with the ruggedness and grandeur of Switzerland, while in its vastness and silence (no art-covered, over-populated spot), it has something of its own.

Just a glance at the Drakenstein themselves before de-

scending. Countless glens and ravines—luxuriant with most wonderful vegetation—indent them on either side. Here and there a cascade pours its sprayey waters over the bold precipices. Now some darkly-wooded “kloof”—now some fearful wall of rock—furnish a contrast to the eye. Around, that bare, scorched, unsympathetic aspect, reminding of the *Alpes Maritimes*; below, in some sequestered spot, a gushing stream and smiling flowers. Here a peak, there a cairn, and then some sweeping hollow, like the spires, the domes, the streets of a great city! Above, that brilliant sky, and transparent air, that invite to song and mirth in the *Provence*.

To beautiful scenery it adds a most charming climate. Winter is here the rainy season, and in this respect it differs from other parts of South Africa, where the winter forms the dry, the summer the wet season. Unless where the ground is very low-lying, and apt to become swampy if it should continue long wet, these winter rains, unlike the cold, cheerless drizzle of a northern European autumn and winter, only tend to refresh the air and beautify the landscape. They may last for a day or two, except when it is a very stormy season; but then the sun bursts forth in his real winter glory, and, for a week or two, there follows splendid, mild weather by day, with considerable cold by night. Vegetation springs up and luxuriates with the most wonderful gorgeousness. This succession of rainy days and brilliant weeks goes on from the end of April to the beginning of September—the length of the South African winter. It is only to be called cold when the wind blows from the sometimes slightly snowcapped mountains. And even when the weather happens to be severe, and the lower land about Stellenbosch, the Paarl, Worcester, etc., is almost inundated, the higher parts about Ceres and Montagu are bathed in sunshine, and the air is dry and pleasant. It is during

this season that the farmers plough and sow, trench the vineyards, and put their gardens in order, and those who wish, may engage with relish in exercise of the heavier sort. The trees remain but about two months without leaves, and by the beginning of summer (there is no spring), the full flush of advanced growth is apparent in garden, corn-field, and untilled land alike—everywhere, except in the vineyard and orchard, which are somewhat later. In summer, since the sky is usually cloudless, and the sun very powerful, the heat is very considerable. But there are plenty of oaks and eucalypti in the villages and on the farms to lend a pleasing shade, and abundance of the choicest fruits to minimise its disagreeable effects. Nature has likewise provided a remedy in the mighty south-east wind, which clears and cools the atmosphere, so that sitting in the open air at even, where there are few mosquitoes and little dust, is a delightful refresher after the langour of the day. The early morning is also very pleasant. But the effect of the blazing summer sun on nature, during the hottest months—December, January, February, and part of March—is very blighting. The sides of the mountains become so sunburnt that no flower or blade of grass seems left alive, and whole tracts look about as bare and dry as a limekiln. The appearance of the bush-covered land as well as the interspersed corn lands—lately cleared of their yellow freight—corresponds. And yet mountain and valley were but two months ago in the morning of summer, decked in inexhaustible variety of flower and herb, and in less than two months will be so again, when their scorched ugliness shall vanish before the cooling dews of early winter. Woe to you in this summer heat, should you be caught by the south-east wind, which has the tendency to blow, sometimes with terrific violence, every afternoon and evening just now. Only a steam-engine may face its charges of dust and stones with im-

punity. As there is properly no spring, so there is scarcely any autumn in the northern signification of the word, unless the beautiful vintage season, towards the end of February and during March, may be so designated. With the mellowing grape and the golden leaf, summer commences to glide quickly and well-nigh insensibly into winter.

Starting from Cape Town for the purpose of visiting the chief towns and villages, you will turn your steps along the foot of the Cape Peninsula Mountains towards Simon's Town. On the way you pass through the charming suburban villages of Mowbray, Rondebosch, Wynberg, Constantia—all reposing in the shade of the woods that clothe the back of Table Mountain. This bit of scenery has been much expatiated on. It is matchlessly beautiful. While the other side of Table Mountain has something like a frown on its scarred face, only partially hidden by the enveloping nightcap of cloud, this is all sweetness and grace. Modern villas and old-fashioned Dutch farmhouses are dotted amid groves of pine, eucalyptus, and orange. Above, on the ridges, amid pine and silvertree and oak woodlands, reigns eternally the spirit of poetry, serene and queenly, and seems to impart to the common life of the people something that would adorn a people of genius—a people with a classic past. What a privilege for the troop of city men to escape, when the day's work in dusty, dingy Cape Town is finished, to these abodes of the Graces! In all the southern hemisphere, it would be hard to find a competitor, both as regards beauty of site and sweetness of climate, to the claim of being named the Cannes, Mentone, or San Remo of the far South. You rest at Kalk Bay, enjoying the splendid view on the sea, the balmy air, and the good fish.

Simon's Town is prettily situated on the western side of False Bay, not far from Cape Point. The mountains rise abruptly behind it. The sea storms in front, and when the

sun beats and the south-easter blows, existence is anything but pleasant. It derives its name from old Simon Van der Stell, one of the first Dutch Governors. It is the naval station of Southern Africa, and, accordingly, a place of great importance and of some life. At the eastern bend of the Bay, opposite, lies Somerset West, delightfully nestling in a little setting at the foot of the Hottentots' Holland Mountains. It looks very pleasingly rustic, with its numerous gardens, orchards, and small vineyards interspersed among the houses. There are magnificent estates in the neighbourhood, well wooded and watered, with hospitable owners, to be visited—one especially, "Vergelegen," with interesting historic associations, as it was laid out by the above-mentioned Van der Stell, whose plantation of stately camphor trees still flourishes.

There is a pass over the mountains here, called Sir Lowry's Pass, which takes you through a wild, rich district to Caledon, so named after a former governor, Earl Caledon. It has a little over 1100 inhabitants, and the district, which produces large quantities of corn and wine, is likewise thickly populated. It has a fine Dutch Church, and is famous for its warm springs, used as baths in certain cases of sickness. Thence, turning back in a north-western direction, you pass near the famous old Mission Station, Genadendal, and through Villiersdorp, and then, crossing the Drakenstein by a pass above Frenchhoek, you get into one of the loveliest vales in South Africa, in which are situated, amid beautiful oaks and fruit trees, Frenchhoek, the Mission Station Pniel, the Paarl, Wellington, and in the vicinity, Stellenbosch. These are noticed in another chapter. Across the plain, and near the western shores of the Cape is Malmesbury, an important commercial place, with a branch line of railway connecting it with Cape Town, and the centre of a very large wheat-growing

country. There are several hamlets on these flats to be visited—Hopefield, Piquetberg, Riebeck Casteel, and then, returning to the mountains and passing through Bain's Kloof, you come to Tulbagh and the beautiful mountain village of Ceres, reached by the celebrated Mitchel's Pass, on the left. Then, bending to the right, through charming mountain scenery, you reach Worcester, and further on, where the country looks more Karoo like, Robertson, Montague, and Swellendam. Worcester lies amid magnificent scenery on a plain, between the Breede and the Hex Rivers. It is a very pretty town, with several churches, handsome stores, and private residences, and looks very sequestered and clean, with its white-washed houses and many gardens. Though only sixty-three miles from Cape Town, as the crow flies, it is 109 by rail, it having been found impracticable to carry the line over the Drakenstein, and so it was necessary to make a great detour in order to clear that range. It has a population of well-nigh 4000. If it be true that there is gold in the district—but, we fear, the wish is father to the thought in this case—it is likely to be very soon quadrupled. Some folks are so unkind as to hint that the worthy city sent forth this report, being at its wit's end for something wherewith to raise the wind.

In these places there is little trade; some trafficking in wine and brandy, some waggon-making, especially at the Paarl and Wellington, and some Magnesia mining in the Paarl district. The chief employment for the large coloured population, resident in each, consists in working in the surrounding vineyards. They have a quaint look about them, and a simplicity and unrestrainedness which make them, even although mostly slow-going, delightful residences to one tired of the worry and hurry of an over-excited world. Approaching at even, when the sun was going down behind the great heights, and sauntering

through the principal streets, with the old folks discussing the probabilities and the children merry at play, we were reminded of our arrival towards sundown at the sweet village of Vence in the Alpes Maritimes. As a restorative for the jaded frame, we would heartily recommend the free, quiet life of these places. The rest, excursions, novelty of scene, abundance of fruit, the pure air, the riding and driving about, etc., have been instrumental in restoring to vigour, crowds of worn out Indian officers and civil servants, who used to stop at the Cape for a time on their way home. There certainly could be no better general health resort for the large numbers at home whose strength has been impaired by business or climate. The Riviera could not afford anything so delightful, with its towns and villages so often full of disease germs. And then you are in British dominions, and your presence adds to the prosperity of the Empire. And living is very cheap, away from Cape Town. For £60 a-year you can live at a country village most comfortably. And there will not be wanting kind people to make your life as diverting as possible. They will drive you to the farmhouses of their friends, take you for rambles on the mountains, organise picnics and evening parties, etc., the only return desired being a due appreciation of them and their ways and their beautiful surroundings. Of course none but a gentleman in character and manner need expect such treatment, for they judge people very fastidiously in this particular.

All the best of the soil is laid out in farms, which are of two kinds, corn and wine farms, although most combine both, the one or the other predominating, according to situation. The former are mostly situated in the Malmesbury and Piquetberg districts; the latter along the bases of the mountains. A corn farm, with the old farmhouse reposing in some sweet nook, is a beautiful sight in Sep-

tember and October, when, after the copious rains of winter, the land is for mile upon mile one expanse of freshest, wavy green. This strikes and charms the eye all the more, as there are nowhere to be found the green meadows and forests of northern Europe. This beauty only blooms to fade, however, for under the mighty sun, the all too early mellowing ears soon fall a prey to the sickle, and then the fields remain baked and parched, till again quickened by the rains.

On approaching a wine farm on a summer morning,—early, let us say, to escape the heat of the day,—the eye falls on the welcome green, mingled with brown or yellow, of the vineyard, in front of the dwelling-house. It is usually very spacious, unlike the small patches so named in many parts of Europe, for here there is abundance of land. It is very often a flat stretch,—the cream of the soil of some little vale,—the strength of the sun's rays and the superfluity of ground not making it necessary to use the sides of the hills for this purpose, as in very old wine-producing countries. Nor are the vines trained on trellises or separate poles, as on the Rhine, for instance; but are much the same in form and size as gooseberry bushes. They bear enormously, and just now, in early February, the number and fine appearance of the bunches incline one not only to stroll leisurely onwards, but, taking advantage of the freedom of action which the abundance granted by nature seems to allow, to pluck of the glorious fruit. Presently you discover the farmhouse, almost hidden by several rows of fine oaks in front, and a large orchard, bordering, perhaps, on a pine-forest behind. There are no nice grounds leading up to it; one may tread on unconventional nature almost up to the doorway. Here is an ostrich camp, some of the birds hatching their eggs; others manœuvring in that excited way which has much resemblance to a witches' dance.

Next a small enclosed flower garden, looking wofully solitary in the midst of its unartistic surroundings. Then a long, narrow wine-cellar, with an ox waggon and Cape cart standing near it; a stable and a "kraal," or square enclosed place for cattle, with a number of horses, pigs, poultry, and dogs scattered about in the neighbourhood; and a primitive distillery for making Cape brandy from the remains of the grape after it has been used for producing wine. Lastly, a high stone terrace, known by the name of the "stoep," extending in front of the house,—a one-storeyed, thatched building, with two wings running off behind. The "stoep" is a peculiarity of its architecture. It is what the fireside is on a winter evening in cold northern lands: there, in the beautiful cool of a summer evening, or in the bright afternoon of a winter day, the family and their friends congregate, and sip their coffee, and talk their bits of scandal, and wax loud in discussion or laughter. "Stoep" is a household word here, fraught with fond recollections. How many stolen delights has it been the scene of, when the moonlight and the rustling oak leaves whispered love! How many partings has it witnessed in the early morning, when the ardent young student set forth for the Northern Hemisphere, thirsting for knowledge and fame; or the stalwart young farmer departed to the far interior, to establish a new home in untried wilds! On it is drawn the domestic circle, where all the joys of family life and all its sorrows are shared. There you find the old man's easy chair, with his papers and cup of coffee and staff and old summer hat; and the matron's couch, with her work basket and old favourite devotional book. And do not, if you please, ask Henrietta, or Linie, or Jan, or Piet, what it has to say of little flirtations, and prolonged promenades, when the good old folks thought them so correct and diligent—you might excite awkward blushes, and be pained at your

own inquisitiveness ; only guess, and realise what a many-sided, brimful of secrets, agreeable spot this stone terrace is. Entering by the front door, leading from it to the inside, you find yourself in a large hall, from which doors open into rooms on either side. One of them is the drawing-room, ancient-looking in its construction, but quite modern in its furniture. The others are bedrooms and a sitting-room, very neatly kept, and chastely furnished, but smelling rather strongly, for many of the good wives have the objectionable custom of smearing the floor once a-week with parafine. The dining-room, which you enter after passing through the entrance hall, is the most spacious of all. Its great size, together with that of the table, reminds one of the bigness of the families, which is rather remarkable. A dozen bairns is the orthodox number, but it is accounted no heresy to have fourteen or fifteen. All these apartments are more English-like than the peculiarly southern appearance of the surroundings of the farmhouse would have led one to expect. The inmates spend their days well, whether outside or inside. Farmer, family, and servants are early astir. A five o'clock cup of coffee begins the activity of the day, and then the farmer and his sons set the servants to work, the farmer, staff in hand, moving about among his numerous coloured retainers with the air now of a patriarch, now of a commander. His sons are, under him, overseers of various work parties. First, the live stock is attended to, the ostriches being let out of the camp ; the cows, oxen, and sheep out of the various kraals. Then the workmen proceed to the plough, or dig in the vineyard in winter ; reap the fields, or gather in the grapes, and make the wine in summer. Inside, the housewife, also early astir, moves about in kitchen and dining-room, superintending and taking part in the work of preparing breakfast and dinner, and assisted by her daughters and a number of

coloured servant maids. This practical part of domestic life performed, madame is transformed from the active housewife into the amiable lady, engaged in light hand-work, and ready to receive and entertain callers, over an afternoon cup of coffee,—a regular institution in South African life. The young ladies devote themselves to reading, do a little painting, practise on the piano, by way of self-improvement, or enjoy a ride on horseback or a game of tennis. When the day's work is over, with the gloaming an air of repose settles on everything, which invites to supper, family worship, a little social chat, and early retirement to rest.

These people, wine and corn farmers of the Riviera of the Cape, are of mingled descent, owing to the intermarriage of the three chief nationalities,—Dutch, French, and German. The Dutch, of course, is the predominating element. We could not remark a very striking likeness to the Hollander, although Baron von Hübner says, and he ought to know :—“Physically speaking, the Boers represent the type of Teniers, and the Breughels; in short, old Holland is represented on the Black Continent just as the France of Louis XIV. has survived political changes in Canada.” The men, in general, are tall, strong, bronzed, and intelligent-looking. They dress plainly and rather carelessly, and seem to shape their manners more according to nature than artifice. In intercourse they are hearty and amiable, easily tempted to become loud-voiced and demonstrative, and, like all Africanders, are fond of exaggerating. It is somewhat difficult to generalise the virtues of the fair sex. It would be alike untruthful and ungallant to speak of it otherwise than with respectful approval. The younger portion want neither grace nor good looks; only they are inclined to fade too soon,—soon, at least, compared with their fresher northern sisters. They are vivacious, intelligent, and well

educated as a rule. In the faces of the older women, considerable traces of their former youthful fairness sometimes discover themselves; in general, however, they do not wear well. In the family, where one can best judge of the relations between the two sexes, there usually reigns affection and harmony. The children show great reverence towards their parents.

They may be said to form the highest class in South Africa. Having been of a more order-loving disposition than the discontented spirits that "trekked" into the wilderness fifty years ago, they have consequently attained a higher point in civilisation than the far interior Boer,—the grizzly-bearded, tangled-haired inhabitant of Stellaland or Goshen, for instance. In contrast to these, they have always been loyal supporters of good government, and it is only since the last Boer War that they have begun to grumble on a large scale, and show something like a revolutionary spirit. They pride themselves on their noble connection, many of them, and speak with affectionate interest of the native lands of their ancestors, although they regard themselves now as forming a distinct nation. Their ancient coat of arms, and any relic brought out by their forefathers, occupy a place of honour in their homes. They are strongly attached to the Dutch Reformed Church, and may be described as old-fashioned believers, not sour and gloomy, but full of reverence, and realistic in their ideas. They are very careful to keep up the grand old custom of daily celebrating family worship,—some of the older farmers even sticking to the ancient practice of reading a chapter in the middle of the day. On the Sunday morning you may see them in their white-hooded Cape carts thronging towards the village on their way to church. These conveyances are collected in some shady place, and the horses fastened to the trees, while their owners patiently and

appreciatively sit out long services. Then follows the friendly greeting of each other by various groups, and the discussion of all matters, both sacred and secular, of chief interest during the past week. If, on making their acquaintance, you have found favour in their eyes—which you may do by being natural, and sharing their contempt for all airs of superiority—their hospitality is boundless. To see an old farmer fluent and animated in the use of his Dutch patois, or in his broken English, it is only necessary to propose some political or theological theme, on which subjects he is conservative, with a considerable amount of dogmatism and some prejudices. He has not seen far into the world, and does not always understand what is beneficial for his country; still he has much influence on its destiny,—more than the farmer in other lands, because he is the proprietor of his farm.

The staple products are, as already indicated, corn, wheat, and wine. There is also a superabundance of fruit of very various kind. The quantity of corn and wheat produced is not sufficient to supply the consumption of the colony; but then there are many districts in the far interior well suited for cereal growing, but which cannot be utilised, owing to the want of proper communication. The rapid railway extension must soon bring out the resources of the other parts of South Africa in this particular also. The old-fashioned way of threshing is still in vogue. The mill is simply an open circle, with hard bottom and low enclosure, in which the sheaves are placed, and ten or twelve mules driven round and round under the inspiration of a big whip, used with great dexterity by a Hottentot driver, until the ears are trampled out. This suggests room for improvement, and brings to recollection the time when they used to plough with a huge wooden thing which they called by that name, with a bush for harrows. More land might also be put

under cultivation. Such things suggest to the stranger a want of energy; but the difficulty of obtaining labour is a palliating circumstance.

The wine industry is a very large one, there being at least sixty millions of vines within this area. No one who has not seen it can imagine how excessively productive they are. It seems so easy for nature to be lavish here. Only be moderately careful in your preparations, and let Providence give a favourable season, which He never fails to do, and you can hardly cart the grapes to the winepress. Pressing begins about the middle of February, and usually lasts about a month. The grapes are brought from the vineyard in baskets packed in a cart. These are emptied on a porous board, placed above a large tub, and the juice is then squeezed out under the heavy tread of two or three bare-footed Kaffirs. This must be a gross piece of information to those, who have only a poetical idea of the process of wine-making. It certainly looks very prosaic and forbidding to see the dirty large Kaffir hoofs pounding away on that board with monotonous thump. All impurity is, however, removed by the after process of fermentation, which acts as a purifier. There is a great variety of kinds, such as Madeira, Pontac, green and stone grape, Haanepoot, Muscat, Hock, and various kinds of sweet. The export price lately for most of these was £8 per hogshead; sweet being £12, Cape Smock £8 to £12. It is a pity that, with such favourable conditions as to climate, soil, abundance and excellent quality of the grape, for carrying on the wine industry, it should not hitherto have been followed by the prosperity which these would seem to invite. The Cape ought to occupy one of the highest places in the world as a wine-producing country; but its fame in Europe has so far been limited to the deservedly fine Constantia wines. The British Government, after taking possession, in

order to offer inducements to Cape wine-growers, reduced the duty on Cape wines entering the British market to one-third of the amount on wines from the South of Europe. But after the conclusion of peace with France in 1815, this privilege was withdrawn, and a stagnation in this industry, as far as export was concerned, followed, and has continued ever since. This is of course not so serious a drawback, so long as the farmers can find a market within the colony. But when trade becomes stagnant, as has been the case during the past few years, the fact of there being no outlet in the form of a profitable export trade tells very adversely upon their prosperity, and that of the whole land. The price received has hardly defrayed the cost of making—a leager being sold for £2,—and loud have been the complaints as to bad times. Some have even gone so far as to try to make their wine into brandy, bad stuff usually, which has the bad consequence of vitiating what is a beautiful and should be a lucrative occupation. While the Government might lend assistance in affording all possible facilities to a part of the empire in the development of what should be its chief industry, such as lowering the tariff below what it is for continental wines, there is no doubt that the want of energy and foresight on the part of the farmers themselves have very much to do with the present miserable condition of the wine trade. The stuff exported is poor and has a bad name. Of course labour is dear, much dearer than on the Continent, and so competition is handicapped. But more cultivation, improved methods of making, so as to ensure a higher class of wine, more persistent effort to get a hold on the English market, etc., would effect a most beneficial change. But, with the exception of a few enterprising men, it is useless to talk to them in this strain. As Mac-kintosh says, "The feelings of beauty and grandeur do not

lead to action, but terminate in delightful contemplation." In the enjoyment of a beautiful climate and rich nature, it is tempting to give oneself up to an easy life, and let the world go as it chooses; and so the good folks do as their forefathers did before them. They forget that whilst they were not much affected in their time by the ebbs and flows of commerce, they live in the time of an increased population, and a commerce liable to periodic fits of depression, upon which they are a good deal dependent. Therefore the present pinch.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HUGUENOTS: AN ADVENTURE AND A STUDY.



WE were rambling, on a bright winter day, in a secluded valley among the Drakenstein Mountains, about thirty miles from Cape Point. The refulgent sky and the crisp air had elevated us into a very animated mood. The freshness of the aspect of nature made us feel as if it were the morning of the world's creation. We were filled with the roamer's spirit, and would have felt more in our element chasing the wind, like a mountain sprite, around the cloud-capped crags, than treading the verdant vale. The poet has, indeed, said that there is a spirit in such a spot, and perhaps, therefore, it was not mere deceptive ecstasy, but some seductive fairy thing that lured us on and on with increasing ardour, until we had left the opener part of the valley a considerable distance behind, and stood frowned upon and hemmed in by the awesome precipices on either side near its head. Thus suddenly startled in our enthusiastic course, the savage ruggedness of the overhanging mountains, and the deep silence of this far away solitude, soon broke the high flight of our fancy, and brought us back to sober thinking. So we sat ourselves down by a tiny silver brook, slipping down from an impending rock "through moss-grown stones with endless laughter," and began to wonder why this magnificent spot had been placed in what has, till comparatively recently, been but a barbarous land, and had not been the scene of great

events, the occurrence of which its natural grandeur seemed to invite, as in the case of many like scenes in other parts of the world. Is not this, thought we, a mistake of Providence, to create so much beauty and grandeur, and to consign it to everlasting silence, while other scenes, less worthy and apparently less adapted than this, have been glorified by becoming the bulwark of freedom and the inspirers of great thoughts and deeds. We should have chosen it as the seat of Paradise, or the scene of a Thermopylae, and behold it is the home of brooding silence and oblivion, and the site of a number of scattered farms, which might have graced any common-place valley quite as well. Truly there are riddles in rocks as well as in life, which prove either our ignorance or the Deity's mismanagement. Whilst arriving at this complacent conclusion, we had gradually sunk into a reclining posture on the soft grass, when suddenly our eye fell upon the figure of an old man standing in a romantic spot, not far off, strongly guarded by the overhanging rocks and sweetly shaded by surrounding trees. We were on the point of concluding that he must be a hermit or a mountain apparition; but, on more sober observation, he appeared too human to be either, and after watching for a little his solemn attitude, we approached and saluted. His form was tall and clad in the easy habit of an husbandman. A broad-brimmed sun hat hid his flowing grey locks, which, with a long white beard, gave him a venerable appearance. The sharp features, aquiline nose, dark eye, and vivacious expression, would, in other circumstances, have led us to conclude that he must be a Frenchman. This spot seemed sacred to him, and, on looking more closely, we discovered among the profusion of grass and wild flowers that covered it, little stone-capped mounds, like graves in an old churchyard, scratched over with almost illegible marks, which might be inscriptions.

And so it gradually dawned upon us that we were standing in some forgotten secluded burial-ground, and had been guilty of unintentionally disturbing the pious meditations and sorrowful reminiscences of some worshipper at the shrine of his forefathers. Having taken a seat on a grassy bank together, we mentioned, by way of diverting his mind from its sadness, the burden of our recent meditation.

"You have yet to learn, kind stranger," was the reply, "that the fervour of reasoning in a young brain must be held in check by the feeling of ignorance. This beautiful valley and these grand mountains have been the scene of one of the most wonderful providences to be read in nature or history's record, lending associations and calling up memories to me around this place as sweet and beautiful as those, that throw romance and interest around the Scotch glens or the Vaudois Valleys. These mountains might well be called the fugitive's refuge; this valley the stranger's home. To me the first are sacred, the second dear; for here my forefathers, who sleep in their narrow cells, in the shadow of these rocks, first breathed the spirit of liberty and peace—first gazed on the sympathetic face of heaven and the wild beauty of nature; when driven from hearth and fatherland, they sought refuge here from tyranny. Listen while I recount to you the history of the French Refugees, who found in the valley of Drakenstein, among the savage heathen, what they could not find in a Christian land—viz., freedom of conscience and liberty of action; and let it be for ever a stain in the history of Christianity, that while the Church sends missions to the heathen to convert them from the ignorance and tyranny of barbarism, it should itself,—at least the Roman Catholic portion of it,—have been at one period guilty of a tyranny and cruelty towards Christians, which even the heathen, whom it piously seeks to teach a better life, would never have practised. For I never yet

heard, even among Hottentots of the lowest grade, that thousands of men, women, and children have been tortured and murdered with pitiless ferocity in one single night, and medals struck by holy hands in commemoration of the event. If that were Christianity, my friend, and not the noble, devoted, heroic faith and practice which characterised those forefathers of mine, I would rather be a devotee of the Hottentot's god, who only requires of his votaries a moderate amount of superstition, without the additional duty of committing murder and pillage!

"After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a large number of French Protestants fled to the Netherlands. The hospitable Dutch not only gave them a hearty welcome, but willingly exerted themselves to provide them with occupations and homes. But Holland is a small country, and it was therefore with great difficulty that numbers of the Huguenots could find means of support. In the large Dutch Colonies, however, there was more scope, and it so happened that the Dutch East India Company was at this time desirous of obtaining respectable and industrious families as Colonists for their possessions at the Cape of Good Hope. Overtures were made to the poor, struggling Huguenots, among whom was a number of Waldensians, and soon an agreement was entered into between them and the Company, by which they were to be transported as emigrants to the Cape, to remain for five years or longer, if willing. Accordingly, during the years 1638 and 1689, several parties of these refugees, numbering in all about 300 souls, arrived in South Africa, and were settled by the Governor, Van der Stell, in the valley of Drakenstein. From that moment this rugged romantic scenery, which here frowns upon us, but far down there, on the opener ground, smiles with corn-lands and vineyards, lost its barren loneliness, and became associated with the living history of a

fearful and momentous time. For here the persecuted wanderers for conscience sake found a refuge and a home, and could these mountains represent to us a tithe of what they witnessed on that bright winter day, such as this, when the Refugees trooped into the valley and greeted them as the protectors of their freedom, and gazed upon the blue sky, mantled with smiles, and breathed the pure air of liberty, we should feel that they are not barren in human interest, but have witnessed enough of joy and sorrow to make even the stones eloquent. And sometimes, I imagine, sitting in this lonely spot on a calm moonlight evening, when light shadows move softly among the bushes, high up the valley's side, that the scene repeats itself, and I can almost see sights that belong to another age, which the everlasting nature still preserves in her secret, and only reveals at such speaking moments, when the moon on the mountain dispels the dumbness of things.

"But there is another side of the picture. There was the remembrance of their recent fearful sufferings, and a homesickness, which, to such patriotic men as the Huguenots, must have been a sharp affliction. There had been deaths among the members of the little band from sickness during a miserable stormy voyage. They were penniless and houseless when they took up their abode here, and had to toil hard to provide shelter and food for themselves and families—no mean hardship for men, many of whom had never been accustomed to such toil. The arbitrary Governor, wishing to blend the different elements of the population into one Dutch-speaking people, did not allow them to dwell all together at Drakenstein, but settled some at Stellenbosch. They were not permitted to have, according to promise, what they esteemed a dear privilege—their independent French Church, but were dictated to in this matter also by the Governor. Such a spirit of hostility arose be-

tween them and the Dutch, owing to what they considered the infringement of their rights, that they resolved not to intermarry with the Dutch, forgetting in their indignation that, if such a resolution were adhered to, they could never marry at all, while the Dutch went so far as to assert that they would rather give a piece of bread to a dog or a Hottentot than to a Frenchman. They were by-and-bye forbidden the use of their own language in public worship, and almost compelled to learn the harsher Dutch. They were oppressed and cheated by the Company's servants, and when they complained to the Directors in Holland, treated still more rigorously, even to the banishment of several of their little community. Partly from this cause, partly from a spirit of adventure, and the necessity, through increase of numbers, of wider expansion—partly also owing to disagreement, at a later time, with the British Government, many of their descendants have extended civilisation into the interior of the country, planting farms on fertile spots, and making many a sequestered glen like this to bloom like a garden. Thus scattered from one centre, and intermingling with other nationalities, they have lost many of the characteristics and the language of their forefathers, and not a few are even ignorant of their grand origin and former history ; but it is dear to me to think, when I visit this sweet spot, and cast my eyes on the wild mountains and the smiling valley, that although our nationality is gone, and with it the romance of our history and the enthusiasm for our past, I can still move here among the heroic spirits of bygone days, and feel through them my connection with the grandest heroism of the most elevating self-denial, and with a higher sphere, where these qualities find their eternal reward. And though no monument but these graves remains to proclaim their fame, the leavening influence which they and their descendants have exerted in the life of this

land, and the grand part which our posterity will yet play in the future in establishing and spreading the good and the great in this ever-widening country, will be seen in heaven, if not on earth, as the aim and recompense of God, fulfilled in the wandering ways of His providence."

The old man had risen from his seat whilst the words of the last sentence fell quickly from his lips, and met our admiring gaze with a benevolent smile, as he cordially invited us to accompany him over a winding path along the tortuous stream; that divided the narrow valley, to his beautifully situated farmhouse, about half-a-mile distant. Wishing to become better acquainted with him and his home, we readily accepted the invitation. On the way he got less solemn and more chatty, informing us that his name was H——, a descendant of that stout ancestor of the same name who, when his countrymen were harshly treated by Governor Van der Stell, did not hesitate to express himself with a largeness of courage in direct contrast to the smallness of his stature, asserting that, "after braving the wrath of the great king of France, they were not afraid of the passion and prejudice of a little tyrant like the Governor." With a twinkle of humour in his eye, he pointed to a deep hollow on the mountains, as he told us that it had been made by the heavy tread of a number of elephants, as they stalked off in stately indignation in search of new solitudes, on the approach of his pioneering ancestors. Now and then he stood still and took a look over the outspreading valley, dotted in the distance with many a pretty home, and mentioned, with barbarous Dutch pronunciation, the French names of their owners, such as Du Toit, Du Plessis, Le Roux, Malherbe, De Villiers, etc. A little further, and we stood before his dwelling. On entering, we were accorded a most hearty welcome by his aged helpmeet and the other inmates. The mother was stately but pleasant-

looking, the sons stalwart and intelligent, the daughters pretty and graceful. From the old-fashioned hall a door opened into a comfortably and neatly furnished drawing-room on the one side, into a sitting-room on the other. Passing out of the hall, we entered a spacious dining-room, whose table was soon covered with a copious repast, the gist of which was formed of mutton joint, Boer bread, and Cape wine.


This over, our old friend planted himself by the cheery fire, looking as social and communicative as a worthy Scotch farmer on the evening of a market-day. He was evidently in the mood for story-telling, and, as is usual with old folks in such circumstances, it took the form of a review of the chief events of his long life. He had witnessed the passing away of the old unprogressive times of the Dutch Government, and the introduction of many improvements under British rule. Now there were trains and telegraphs and roads over the whole land; then a man seldom left the district in which he was born, and knew as much about the affairs of the great outside world, which are daily cabled from London now-a-days, as we know of the concerns of the inhabitants of some other planet. Now there is almost independent rule—a Cabinet and Parliament at Cape Town,—then the bondage of the people was so extreme that one of the Governors, observing some women walking one day in the hot sun with parasols, and deeming this a token of idleness, too bad to be endured, ordered that they were not to be used in future. Now they had a university and excellent colleges and schools, with education eagerly sought after by all classes; then all the learning the people were able to reach was in most cases that, which could be supplied by some drunken old soldier or sailor, who would have been in his just place in prison, and who might sometimes be caught teaching the

children to read with the book upside down. Now a man could be married with simple ceremony and a reasonable amount of martyrdom; then it was necessary for all parties to go to Cape Town, however many hundreds of miles they might live into the interior, and the thing was not fashionable unless they proceeded to church in a waggon drawn by a team of 14 oxen. Now there was peace and prosperity throughout the length and breadth of the land, then the fearful Kaffir wars raged almost at the back of those mountains, and the country was full of violence and murder. He had been old enough to take part in the stormy times that followed the emancipation of the slaves in 1833. The Huguenots, under the influence of changed surroundings, had forgotten to practise the precept that we are to love our neighbour as ourselves, and had made slaves of the natives. And he could go some years beyond 1833, to 1806, when a real revolution in the government of the Cape took place, after the battle of Blaauwberg in that year. He could remember the excitement among the burghers called out to defend the doomed Dutch domination, and could hear the roar of the fight, for the battlefield was distant but a few miles from the valley. But even Huguenot valour could not withstand Highland prowess. Sir David Baird was the commander of the British, who, between 5000 and 6000 strong, were kept for some days from landing, owing to the fearful storm raging in Table Bay. At length they ventured to land, almost unharmed by the fire of those posted on shore, the Highland Brigade, consisting of the 71st, 72nd, and 93rd Regiments, leading; the 2nd Brigade following. Their opponents numbered 5000 men, Huguenot and Dutch Burghers and regular troops, under the Dutch General Janssens, with 23 pieces of cannon. The Dutchman adopted some skilful manœuvring in order to outflank his enemy, but the Highland

Brigade pressed steadily forward under a deadly fire, answering shot for shot, while the artillery was playing upon their opponents from another direction. The Dutch stood their ground bravely until the Highlanders charged with the bayonet, when they broke and fled, leaving 700 men dead and wounded on the field. Next day the Cape became British territory and the Huguenots British subjects, and the miserable tyranny of the Dutch came to an end. Happily, wise measures for the better government and enlightenment of the inhabitants were inaugurated; measures to which, with the support of their old weight of character and religious spirit, they owe their present advancement.

Suddenly there is a marked stillness like that in some sacred place, and the old man's face takes on its solemn look again, and the young men and maidens leave off their banter and look serious, as their sire takes down the big Dutch Bible, and, with sonorous voice, begins to read. It is Burns' scene over again, but more novel and romantic. His devotions were pathetic and beautiful—almost prophetic in their fervour and richness of expression, to which the surrounding hills and dales, bushes and plants, past and present history, contributed. We retired with a homely feeling of relationship here, and with a lively sense of the old man's charity, as intense in its welcome of the stranger as was that of this lovely vale towards his homeless ancestors.

Rising early the next morning, we stood on the "stoep" in front of the house, viewing the grand scene of yesterday's ramble with interest, after the incident with which it was so pleasantly associated. The first purple rays of the ascending sun were just struggling for free outlet from a mass of misty cloud, that lay heavy on the summit of the hills. Much that escaped our notice at first now revealed



itself, and so different was the appearance of everything from our new standpoint, and with our additional information, that we felt as if we had gone to bed in an old world, and risen to find ourselves in a new one. Around us were a crescent of towering mountains, almost perpendicular at several points for many hundreds of feet, and glittering in the morning sun with many a silvery stream, broken now and then into picturesque cascades, as they dashed down the sides of the mountains, to feed the winding torrent that rushed through the valley below. Within the shadow of this mountain crescent lay what seemed to be a little village—its little church, quaint-looking houses, and deserted streets still half-asleep in the yet shadowy light. Through the narrow opening, where the almost semicircular mountains had been hindered in their circular expansion, and had contracted together—the scene of yesterday's adventure—we could obtain a peep of the wide-sweeping valley beyond, set in a frame of imposing mountains; and the more thickly studded, the further it swept, with farmhouses, vineyards, corn-lands, and orange groves. We were standing watching the gradual moulding of everything into greater distinctness of form, with the increasing radiance of the sun, and trying to appreciate somewhat of the joy and brightness that with every second in increasing measure animated mountain and village, and vineyard and corn-field, when our host, appearing at the doorway with as kindly a look as if he had been our grandfather, bade us a hearty good morning, and invited us to breakfast. But his goodness was patient enough to answer a few questions first. "The village nestling in that little hollow near the bush-covered base of the green mountain yonder is Frenchhoek. Secluded and antique, it is the centre of our community—its little Dutch church, with the encircling graveyard, being the meeting-place on Sunday of the inhabitants of the village, and the

dwellers on the scattered farms around. Then we seem more like a large family, met for family worship, than a public congregation, for we are nearly all related to each other through intermarriage, and, I hope," he added, "spiritually related as well by the bonds of true piety, such as characterised our noble fathers. That rather prominent building is the school, and near it stands the post-office, from which the post-cart starts several times a-week, thus connecting us with the outer world. Under that shaggy oak tree, which you see at some distance from the village, repose the ruins of an old clay cottage, built by one of the Refugees, which, together with a few pieces of old furniture and china—very valuable of their kind—are almost the only relics of our fugitive ancestors, if we except the deep courses of some of the brooks, which are the trenches dug by them, in order to drain the swampy soil and part of the vineyards, once tangled thickets, but which were gradually cleared and planted with the vine. In the valley yonder are many beautiful farms laid out by them, and several interesting towns formed by their descendants; but come in and have breakfast, and then we shall take a long drive round, so that you may form closer acquaintance with the place and its people."

Accordingly, after a genial breakfast, we got into a handsome Cape cart, drawn by two swift Cape horses, and driven by a Cape coloured boy, whose genealogy we were rather puzzled to trace, as he seemed to have something of a Hot-tentot, something of a Bushman, and something of a Frenchman in his figure and look. We were speedily carried out of this confined spot into the opener country. After driving for about two hours along the banks of the torrent, which gradually increased to a rough-bedded river, called the Berg River, and having in our course passed many sweetly situated farmhouses, the air of whose surroundings was redo-

lent with the scent of the orange blossom and the violet, we came to a little church, erected at this spot by private munificence, in memory of Pierre Simond, the French pastor, who accompanied the Refugees, and who has given his name to the little hamlet near, called Simondium. This set the old man chatting about the minister, the folk thereabout having the same proclivity thereto as is to be observed among the rural inhabitants of Scotland. They will discourse for hours on that subject, and so we had to listen to all particulars concerning the said Pierre Simond. He had been appointed by the East India Company to minister to the Refugees, and took his departure for the Cape shortly after that of the members of his future flock. They had gathered on the shore on the day of the arrival of the vessel, to bid him welcome. It was a touching moment. They watch with emotion and excitement the sails being furled and the anchor thrown out. Presently a boat is launched, and eight men, among whom might be their leader, put off towards the shore. Just after it had left the ship, it was overtaken by a sudden squall, and capsized. Its occupants, left struggling in the water, disappeared in a few moments below the surface, to the distress of those on board, but especially of those on shore, who did not yet know who were in the boat. Some hours of anxiety elapsed before they at length learned that the drowned men were three officers and five seamen of the ship. Then followed an outburst of feeling on the lonely shore there, as the pastor and his people met, such as those only, who know with what devotion and respect the Huguenots looked upon their heroic ministers, can imagine. And he seems to have been worthy of both—a man of great courage, deep sympathy, pure motives, high-toned earnestness, and prompt resolution—the right man to inspire them for the discharge of the duties, and the struggle with the difficulties of their new life and circumstances.

An hour's further drive brought us to Pniel, a romantically situated industrial mission station in connection with the Dutch Reformed Church. We were struck by the air of repose, mingled with activity, which the charming little place wore, and which contrasted with the stern grandeur of the mighty Simon's Berg near—a mountain likened by Dr. Duff, when he paid a visit here, in natural appearance, to Mount Sinai. It is an appropriate spot for a mission, not only because of its charming natural beauty, but also because it stands in the bosom of the possessions of those wanderers—perhaps the richest and fairest portion of all—a silent acknowledgment of God's faithfulness.

During our drive from here to the Paarl, of about an hour's duration, we called at several farms, at each of which, after the preliminary chat, we had to go through the exercise of drinking strong coffee. It must be confessed, however, that their courtesy was much better than their coffee. The Paarl is a real pearl, being charmingly situated among oak groves and vineyards at the foot of the mountain bearing the same name, and distant about forty miles from Cape Town. Perhaps no other town in the world is like it, as it is composed of one fantastic street, extending for six or seven miles along the foot of the mountain. The enormous boulder on the summit of the latter is the great sight of the place. Along the base are granite quarries of great value. Among the public buildings, the two Dutch churches, the gymnasium, and a first-class public school for girls, are the most prominent, and it embraces perhaps the only building in South Africa which professes to be a work of art, for the gymnasium is ornamented on the outside with Egyptian figures, and contains inside a collection of Egyptian relics! The town is a great centre of political sentiment—the Transvaal Boers are said to have been greatly encouraged to take up arms against the British Government through

the incitements to rebellion, emanating from a kind of secret society of patriots here—and its people have got the good or bad reputation, according to the political views of the outsider, of supporting the political association called the *Africander Bond*. This *Bond* is rather revolutionary in its tendency, and often blamed for fanning race hatred among the different nationalities of South Africa. However this may be in theoretical politics, it did not seem to be so in practical life, for, under the protection of our patriarchal friend from the mountains, we were everywhere most cordially received, and royally treated by people whose French names, such as *Malan*, *Marchand*, *Jordan*, *Joubert*, *Marais*, etc., let alone other considerations, such as brotherhood in the glorious cause of the *Africander Bond*, were sufficient in such company to ensure us their cordiality.

We had now but little time to take a glance at the village of *Wellington*, about two miles further down the valley. It is chiefly known from its being the seat of a splendid institution for the education of young ladies, called, in memory of the French Refugees, “*The Huguenot Seminary*.” One of the features of the establishment is, that the boarders must do all the household work—the intention being to train them as housewives as well as develop their minds. We might have gone further in our exploring journey—on to *Tulbagh* and *Worcester*, or turned aside to visit *Stellenbosch* and *Somerset West*, and we should still have found many of the race of our new-formed friend, but the afternoon being already advanced, we had to rein up and turn round, and so we retraced our steps through the long lovely valley, revolving in our mind, towards the beautiful sunset of what had been a glorious winter day, the experience by which we had made practical acquaintance of an interesting people.

They are a fine race, especially the men, who, as hardy farmers,

are usually of tall, powerful frame, with intelligent, bronzed faces and stately, aristocratic mien. Their manners are free and unassumed, but naturally refined by sincerity of purpose and kindness of sentiment. Although the climate and their former difficult circumstances have perhaps served to nurture a rather general hastiness of temper, they are easily mollified. Their long-continued living in solitude, and their intercourse and intermarriage with the more lethargic Dutch, are likely to blame for their lack of that vivacity and obtrusiveness characteristic of French manners; still they are not dull, but cheerful and bright, especially on a festal occasion, when the bright scenery of the south and the glow of social intercourse often strike a hidden vein of French *legerté*. Their attachment to the Dutch Reformed Church has taught them reverence for religion, deepened by the impressiveness, and eloquent silence of their wild, mountainous surroundings. Their hospitality is boundless, and is often so inexplicably generous, that it sets a stranger, accustomed to the selfishness of this nineteenth century, wondering whether this kindness of heart does not belong to their seventeenth century ancestors, who had enough of hardness to endure and sorrow to suffer to teach not only themselves, but even their unborn posterity, the practice of this divinely enjoined virtue. Their home life is simple, but virtuous, and their tenderness of heart throws a touching halo over the family circle. Their ideas are not very large, their conversation rather commonplace, and their ideals few; but they have character pronounced enough to interest a stranger. Education is held in high esteem, and many a family is accomplished enough to please a refined taste, and to give an elevated tone to their private life. With the older Dutch families they form the ancient aristocracy of the land, and this not merely from length of residence and the occupation of respectable positions, but many of them, as their names

show, are descended from old French families of rank and fame. But whilst they might be considered as a landed aristocracy, they are distinguished in life and manners more by the social freedom and solidity of character of the old burgher class, than by the exclusiveness of the European aristocratic class. Their forefathers had the merit of bringing to the Cape their noble names and unsullied reputation, and they and their descendants have thus helped to preserve that dignity and nobility of descent, which is a characteristic of the inhabitants of Cape Colony, in contrast to many other colonies, founded by bands of convicts or adventurers. Minus this element, the Africanders would have been without about 60 per cent. of the good qualities they possess. They are the backbone of the people. The cultivation of the vine, which has beautified and enriched the Cape so much, is largely due to their care in encouraging it. From their connection with a great world, on whose stage they played such a striking part, they have given to one chapter of Cape history a tinge of romance and interest. They excel as husbandmen, especially of the ancient type, sitting under their fig tree, and easily enjoying life on the fruits of their fertile possessions, or living as sheep farmers in patriarchal fashion in the interior; but they are to be found occupying other and more influential posts, where their original acuteness and readiness of acquisition stand them in good stead against all competition. Many occupy prominent positions as ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church, some are members of government, some judges, lawyers, and physicians, some affluent merchants, some highly placed in the civil service, some rulers of the interior states, some schoolmasters and musicians. The influence which they wield upon the current life of South Africa is thus very many-sided and very great in volume; and although their ideas in regard to government, education, missions, and

progress bear the stamp sometimes of the dark side of a bygone age, they are destined to increase in power and enlightenment and fame with the growth of time and the expansion of their sphere. It is with a people as with an individual. Just as the latter can look back upon the path of toil and hardship by which he attained his present position, with thankfulness to the kindly Providence of the universe for those blessings in disguise meted out to him, so a people, inheriting the benefits arising from its forefathers' trials, can thank the Almighty for the past, praise Him for the present, and trust Him for the future. This applies in the case of the descendants of the Refugees, scattered throughout South Africa, who, reaping the fruits of past suffering, enjoy the present, and, led on by a kind though mysterious Providence, will share with others the honour of creating in the future the old civilisation of the North in the new realms of the South!

The last three sentences we had addressed to our venerable companion, thus breaking a long silence, just as we caught sight of his pretty dwelling, about a mile ahead, cosy and romantic in the bright moonlight. "My friend," he replied, "it is wonderful how time shapes our ideas, and turns our afflictions into blessings, unfolding to the pious observer of the past and the present the presence and the marvellous designs of Providence. I would not change my present lot, so peaceful and happy, for all the wealth of the green plains of France, which my forefathers left so reluctantly, and the thought of which must have cost them many a season of sorrow. When I think of our easy prosperity, it confirms to me a promise which was but a thing of hope to them. 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children.' When I look at our grand mountains, it reminds me of that sublime statement in the

Psalms, which expresses not only the poetical spirit of these heights, and the assurance of divine care and help in these troublous days of the present, but of the divine remembrance and guidance in uncertain days to come." And thus saying, he repeated the majestic, impressive words: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth, even for ever," words which still rang in our ears as next morning we wended our way from this hospitable home to our place of residence.

CHAPTER VII.

PICNICING AND LOVEMAKING.



T was one of those early summer evenings at the Cape, when lingering winter makes the air cool and the verdure fresh enough to invite a sentimental stroll. The influences were abroad that, according to the Poet Laureate, lure one to cherish the tender flame. Quite natural, therefore, that they exchanged kind glances as they admired the soft sky, and did homage to the solitary majesty of nature. They don't know what it means, this confidential intermingling of soul among the beautiful heaths and aroms there. It might be "natural animation," or possibly "harmony of opinion,"—you are on the path, and will by and bye stumble on the right word. It takes a time to see the true signification of such an experience, and it is still the elementary part of the first stage. But let nature be adored for proving herself once more the handmaid of beautiful feeling—no silly flirtation, which those who are stirred, not by her, but by a passing superficial excitement, may briefly practise. Something more real has this quiet seductive evening given birth to, but many opportunities have still to be sought before it is perfect. So it is all the world over—there must be tea drinkings, birthday presents, accidental meetings, stolen trystings, and so forth,—but how do they specially finish the enterprise at the Cape? By the holding of a picnic, and so, certain weeks after that summer evening stroll, due

announcement is made to this effect. The stranger will contribute some distraction, perhaps, and thus give more room for the privacy of love-making. So he is invited.

There is, perhaps, no other land, where picnicing forms such a frequent pastime as at the Cape. The brightness and mildness of the climate, the grandeur of the scenery, and the general dearth of the more artistic means of amusement, as well as an inclination to live much in the open air, account for this fondness for picnicing. It is incomparably healthier than the crowding of hot halls on cold nights, or the everlasting crouching by the fireside over a book, which is the doom of the man who seeks diversion from the worry of life in many lands less favoured by the sun. Without it, the Cape would be a very dull place indeed, and even with it, it is almost unbearable for those who cannot find in the free roaming in nature any great good, but who must ever have something excitingly artistic to fill up their leisure hours. We are not saying that the absence of the latter is not a great want—the Cape is deplorably backward in this respect, with no good theatre, scarcely any great musical entertainments, no fine gallery. Yet there may be too much made of art, and too little thought of nature; too much irrational staring and silly criticism, and so to many an art-sick soul this unconventional enjoyment of beautiful scenery and a glorious sky would be a God-sent prescription. Therefore, while it might be said to an Africander, whose highest idea of the artistic is often associated with the collection of hideous photographs in his album—Know something of that sphere, where nature and representation are one—to the European, living so much in the artistic as almost to land in the artificial, it might be said,—Know something of the original, whose fantastic image has dulled your sense as to what is fresh and natural. It would not be superfluous were the

Africander to listen to this advice too, since his enthusiasm for nature, as well as his acquaintance with art, is very difficult to stumble upon. The gorgeous wealth of colour and scenery in which he lives, has often a chloroform influence upon him. But he must find some means of diversion, and all other considerations aside, this mere love of the open air is a beautiful trait in South African life, and has elevated the custom of picnicing into a national institution.

The day and the place have been arranged. We are to drive on the second New Year's Day to the seaside, and more particularly, to Somerset West Strand, about ten miles from Stellenbosch. It is the fashionable watering-place of a large part of South Africa. We are a numerous party—a singularly self-satisfied company of sonsy lasses and sturdy lads,—most with the vigour and hue of farm life in their figures and faces. They would make you believe that it was mere evolution, no design, that made the quality and quantity of the party so. Yet it had, doubtless, been the subject of anxious consideration, and it does not require much acquaintance with psychology to trace the processes of sentimental calculation, by which the especial number was arrived at. He, that had fallen in love, had room for only one; he, that felt inclined to fall in love, for two, for he was deliberating as to which one, and wished a final opportunity to decide; he, that was neither in love nor in danger of falling into it, for as many as would make the party large and noisy, and so screen his taking advantage of a stray chance to do a little flirting. Doubtless, the same impulses had been agitating the other sex, but all traces of the secret conclaves of the last few days had disappeared, and on this fine morning the sun shone on innocent hearts and happy faces.

The rendezvous had been set down for 4 o'clock in the

morning. But unpunctuality is a very general vice among South Africans. It had, therefore, struck six before there was anything like a decent gathering. The route lay over an undulating road, amid singularly sweet scenery—a succession of soft glens, separated from each other by gently rolling ridges and dotted with farmhouses, encircled by vineyards. Our friends seemed to derive easy inspiration to mirth, both from their beautiful surroundings and the hilarious motion of the large spring-waggon, each drawn by eight horses. Cape people are generally of a very joyous disposition. You need not seek for much depth of mind, or much pungency or sparkle of wit, but what they have of either is easily drawn out, and, heightened by a large fund of vivacity, makes their company diverting, if not absorbing. It would be unnatural otherwise. We could hardly picture a taciturn Scot, roaming moodily amid that laughing scenery, with the melancholy greeting on his lips—“A rainy day this, man.” Even he must throw off the dourness that the storms and mists of a rigorous climate have germinated in his nature, and become animated and open. Then could he sympathise more with the laughing guilelessness of Southern life, instead of suspiciously misinterpreting it.

Now is the moment for a sketch of the Cape youth, as we rattle along in the bright morning air. Judging from our companions—a fair sample—we shall allow the South African girl to be pretty. She cannot lay claim to the freshness and vigorous appearance of her northern sister—indeed, owing to climatic influences, she too frequently only flowers to fade. It is perhaps a compensation of nature, that a certain unassumed grace and ingenuousness remain, to distract the attention. She is rather below the medium height, has dark eyes, dark hair, slender figure, open expression, elastic movements, and winning manners. Her

dress, in accordance with sky and scenery, is of some light, bright material, which adds great picturesqueness to an assemblage such as that of which we form a part this morning. She is fairly accomplished—has read something, and can play and paint a little; but you must take care to go neither too deep nor too high, and must not expect that independence and higher grasp, which characterise the minds of thoroughly educated women. You will be listened to and may be admired, but not understood. She is exceedingly impressionable—her element is a moonlight evening,—too sentimental, however, and there might be more wholesome energy of spirit. The good creature earned a right kindly critique from one, who must be supposed to judge with an impartiality, that does honour to his geniality. It would not become a young man to speak so, but Baron von Hübner has the liberty of old age on his side. He says: “The guests walk about in groups, and to speak for a moment of the ladies, I challenge contradiction in declaring that fine figures and fine dresses are the rule. Here are charming types of fair Albion; here also are ladies who seem to have stepped out of the canvass of Rubens and Van Dyck. Others too, there are, and those singularly graceful, whose pale complexion and dark, silvern hair call to remembrance the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which determined their ancestors to found a branch of the family at the farthest end of Africa. I see here a fascinating Australian. But hush, here come the goddesses of the South African Olympus!”

The Cape youth is a worthy counterpart of the other sex. In general comely, he is both strongly built and tall of stature. The sun bronzes him; his occupation broadens him; nature and education have furnished him with a fair intelligence and manners, very unlike those, indeed, which most people have ignorantly come to associate with the

word Boer. He would not suit a very correct taste—his bows are rather mechanical, his social power in the matter of talk rather contemptible, and he might lay aside that monotonous, very badly fitting style of dress, which adorned his great grandfather. But there is something pleasingly natural about him, which attracts a kindly soul. Meet him when he is engaged in his beautiful calling—that of wine farmer (we do not speak of the far interior here), and you will mark within him a kindness of feeling and uprightness of character, fitted to draw forth generous admiration. He excels in riding, and we fear it much, in flirting, which attaches to him occasionally the character of “the swain,” and gives rise to a nauseous tendency to indulge in frivolous banter, with each other, and with the fair sex, upon the great fact. They are at it just now, the transgressors, in their pawky Cape Dutch patois, and perhaps the reader will thank us for this picture of our companions, instead of detailing the trifling stuff, that, interspersed with laughter and song, has been whiling away the two hours’ ride.

We have reached the brow of the last ridge, and stand in full view of the sea. It is difficult to say what sea it is. It is not the Atlantic, for it is on the east side of the Cape, nor the Indian Ocean, as it is not far enough north. The view is straight south, so we shall imagine that it is the commencement of the cold, wild Southern Ocean. It is a magnificent semicircular expanse—False Bay—bounded on either side by a majestic mountain chain, which runs far into the sea. Descending gradually for about a mile, the beach is reached, and lo, we find ourselves suddenly stuck fast on the top of a sand hillock, near the entrance of the great city of Somerset West Strand! It was rather a queer mode of arriving, but it seemed the common one, and nobody smiled as we alighted and looked on, whilst our wagon was being dragged to stabler ground.

The whole company had arrived, but there seemed to be a want of organisation,—or were we not initiated? At anyrate, it seemed suddenly to disappear in a mysterious fashion, and we were left, its solitary representative, on the sands of the seashore. It is all this lovemaking and flirting again—the young sinners have slipped away, some among the bushes, others behind the rocks, others, God knows where, or what they are doing, but we are not responsible for whatever engagements may follow, and can't stand a target to the wind and driving sand. So we resolved to explore the town and see what kind of life is that at this Cape watering place.

On looking round, we were in doubt whether to cherish sentiments of compassion or amusement. The people had very grandly told us, that we were bound for the great health and fashionable resort of South Africa. Our curiosity was of course acutely aroused, and faint sketches of Swiss and Italian watering places passed through our imagination. And now all that there was to see, was seen in fewer seconds than there are words in this sentence,—a few small houses, bearing the sign of hotels, and three or four cottages, the whole being nearly choked up to the eaves by a bank of sand, with a slopy beach, bounded by a rough sea, doing duty as a street in front! The eye sought in vain for a tree in the near neighbourhood, to give shade from the sun or protection from the terrific wind, carrying sand by the ton before it. Yet people talk of going to the Strand in much the same way as Londoners talk of going to Brighton. They make themselves believe, it seems, that they are doing a very fashionable thing in burying themselves up to the ears in this sand-hillock, in front of the furious sea; and now, during the height of the season, every available inch of space is taken up by a crowd from town and country. After that, you may as well look for æsthetic

sentiments under the hide of a hippopotamus as among Africanders. They all protest, of course, that they are here for recreation and health ; but, with some exceptions, one is pretty near the mark in saying, that this is just a gloss to hide a hankering after the fashionable. Here is a country lass on horseback by the side of a gallant swain, prancing about as if she had just left a London drawing-room, her sorry brute up to his knees in sand. They are madly attempting to shout down the wind, and to hold themselves on their horses' backs, taking the meanwhile a whole hundredweight of sand into ears, nostrils, neck, and pockets. In the afternoon it is tennis, or strumming on a cracked piano, or singing, of the amateur sort, and then the whole room is moved with emotion, and her companion of the morning is clean lost amid the crowd of admiring rivals. The fitting counterpart of this is the awkward old Boer, who tries to perform the part of the worthy old gentleman. Never mind his incorrect English : he talks with dignity. Mark not his ill-cut habit : it gives him an ancient air. Be not too refined, when he expectorates just under your nose ; old age must have its liberties. Give the old man the benefit of his dream—he is highly appreciated, and acts the spirit of the place. The young sprig from the city and the old matron from the village are quite as good, as is likewise the performance of the brass band, the music of which, when you happen to catch a stray sound, amid the roaring of the South-Easter, reminds you of the shouting of a New-haven fishwife, short of breath, on reaching the top of Leith Street.

At this point of our observations there were signs of the straggling couples of the party returning, and, animated by a sudden feeling of charity, we shall hope that this was but an especially wicked day at the Strand, and get into good humour at the prospect of some refreshment. We could

read pretty nearly the kind and conclusion of their previous intercourse, from the expression of their faces and the state of their tempers. Some were wonderfully gleeful, and inclined to perform acts of general benevolence. Some had made no progress, and were labouring under a feeling of disharmony. Some had been reasonable enough not to commit themselves, and retained their former equanimity; the rest had been occupied the whole time teasing each other, and were still in a malicious mood. All were, however, hungry, and having retired to a sheltered hollow, within sound, but not sight, of the sea, the picnic repast was commenced. Our fair companions had taken care that this part of the day should be fitly occupied, and so the baskets, which were brought from the different waggons, were loaded with nice things—roast fowl, duck, turkey, goose, beef and mutton, washed down with sweet and dry wine, and followed by a dessert embracing the most delicate fruits. Such good eating must needs be followed by a siesta, after which a cup of coffee was handed round. Then came a proposal, in spite of the heavy meal and fiery sun, to have some games. One was very like a dance, but we promised not to tell, for they were all very pious in church last Sunday, and this breach of the puritan notion of liberty of conscience might have brought them to the point of penance before the ministers and fathers of the parish. Another was extremely sentimental and flat—these are the pious youth, who wont dance—and there was not a trace of the manliness and heartiness, which characterise a good Scotch reel, about the whole of those primitive manoeuvres, which they called games. This is the chief fault of half measures in amusements. Many good people labour under the belief, that God has created religion but not human nature, and forget that the free expression of that nature in all its many sympathies is both lawful and

natural. It is foolish, all this trying to keep within the straight line,—mere imagination instead of conscience, and ends in making them ridiculous and insipid. We shall off from the artificial thing and enjoy a look at nature. She is so free and calm and real. These magnificent mountains—the Twelve Apostles they call them—how they defy the vacillating ocean by their unchangeable strength! No restraining of their proper being, no assuming a false one. May we ever listen less to our narrow selves, and more to our mountains in such matters!

The sun is going down, and it is time to take the homeward way. We have a feeling as if it were morning instead of evening, as far as the picnic is concerned. We were under the impression that it was to be a day in nature, and we have only at the eleventh hour got an enjoyable peep at her. It is all owing to this sandheap and its associated mimicry of high life, as also the unsocial proclivity to flirt. It had been pleasanter alone, or in company of a congenial spirit, among the sweet bits of scenery, 'mid those mountains, where the sympathetic soul may lose itself in contemplation, or be stirred by the poetical impressiveness of everything. But this is too much to ask of an undeveloped nation, a stranger to the deep, mystic being of its glorious surroundings.

There is more of novelty in the homeward journey. The second New Year's Day is more a holiday than the first for all classes. Consequently, the road is crowded with white people, half-castes, and Malays, returning from the Strand and other spots, where they have spent the day in merry-making. There are some amusing spectacles. Here is a procession of coloured people—Hottentots they are usually called—the wives and children transported in rickety old carts, frail even in the days of their owners' grandfathers, and looking now as if an energetic grip would crush to dust

their crumbling timbers. Each is drawn by a sturdy ox; in rare cases by a pair, headed by a boy as leader. They have imbibed freely, and are now busy quarrelling, drinking, singing, and shouting rough jests. Here and there we pass large parties of the same, who have "outspanned," and are sitting around their camp fires, enjoying the evening meal, or dancing on the grass to the music of an old concertina, or the strains of some ditty, sung by themselves. Drinking has been so freely indulged in by many, that they are only able to lie by the wayside, and sleep or shout. We must make some allowance, however, as they are celebrating their emancipation from slavery and serfdom, some half-a-century ago. Crowds of Malays have been picnicing this day also. They are better mounted, and far more picturesquely clad, and have not indulged so rashly in the pernicious cup. But they seem to form a more alien element of the population. They are not sympathetic. Even in their merrymakings they wear something of the dull air of the Moslem. The numerous parties of white people, merry with song and love, not with wine, did not attract much attention, for our curiosity is aroused by the coloured tourists—Hottentots and Malays. It would be difficult certainly to construct a genealogical tree representing the descent of the former. There seems a mixture of three or four nationalities in his person—Bushman, Hottentot, European, and perhaps, Kaffir,—but the intermingling of Ham and Japhet, which he represents, can hardly be called an improvement. He has thereby lost that savage look (in its kind almost a virtue) and stalwart mien of the Kaffir, and has failed to absorb the finer features and marks of intelligence, which characterise the white man. Here is certainly an example of retrogression of a part of the human species, through influences which should have elevated, but which, strange to say, have lowered him. How is it? Because of that

tendency in man to absorb the bad, and neglect the good, among the moulding powers in things and persons around him, which is only checked in the case of virtuous souls, even among civilised nations, but which has universal sway over the poor savage, unless there be an opposing power, such as Christianity. Therefore, if the white man only showed him the degrading in his intercourse with him, the cause of his present state is patent. It may not have been so in many cases, for many of the old Dutch Boers were undoubtedly examples to their slaves and serfs, and his own low nature may have contained the germs of his declension; still the white man has much to account for. Two hundred years ago, the Hottentots wandered over those hills and plains after their flocks a healthier, if not a nobler, people. As he is now, he is a failure—a yellowish, ill-formed, sensual-looking creature, who has learned many of the vices, but few of the virtues of civilisation. They form the labouring class of the country, and are perhaps the ugliest and the lowest of that class to be found in the whole world. Some, however, under better influences, have developed into a higher class, with better physiognomy, more industrious habits, and more moral character. They speak a little English, account themselves a much higher kind of being than the Kaffir, are proud of being British subjects, and want you to feel, especially on Sunday, in their gaudy fitout, that they are really one of your countrymen, and quite your equal. We should be the last to grudge them the privilege, if they would drink less, be more cleanly in their houses and habits, and have a more vigorous tone in their home life.

The Malays betray their Oriental origin, not only by their light-yellow colour, but also by their dress. The men wear the red Turkish cap, wide trousers, and sometimes the Oriental robe. The women are fond of colour and bulk

in their garments. Their figure resembles an enormously distended beehive, with a head sticking out at the top. They were brought from Batavia and Java in the time of the Dutch Government, and reside chiefly in Cape Town. They are mainly handicraftsmen, skilful, but lazy, with innumerable holidays, such as this one, to interrupt steady work, and keep alive their lingering, Eastern customs. Being Mohammedans, they are rather unprogressive and uncongenial neighbours. They have a mosque, priests, peculiar religious feasts and ceremonies, and a separate burying-ground. The wealthier now and then take a pilgrimage to Mecca. This one, so richly clad and so much revered by his fellows, has attained that high rank.

The moon has risen higher, and the night is wonderfully beautiful. The revelling has increased with the evening hours; but it is now so secretly still there, where they sit in the pine-grove, on the slope of the hill, behind the farmhouse, where, in the soft moonlight, everything seems fantastic as its own shadow. Such an hour and such a scene would do for the "Midsummer Night's Dream." And how have they spent the day? The fact that they are here is the answer. Their time has not been given to mere flirting. A truer inspiration has possessed them—something, which beautiful nature has nurtured. A first impression has become an elevated idea. What a vista of dreams at this shadowy hour meets their glance lifewards! It is one blaze of soft moonlight, a gentle slope, and mighty pines, with the sigh of sorrow no nearer than their tops, and rest beneath. It is a delusion, of course—there is a barren moor but a few yards ahead, and the way lies through it; but let it change as it may without, within, where true feeling holds sway, there must be joy and beauty.

In the far interior, "the wooin' o't" contrasts much with that given in the above picture. Mr. Anthony Trollope has

described it so well, that we prefer to convey our own observation of it in his words:—"They are very great at making love or 'freying,' as they call it, and have their recognised forms for the operation. A most amusing and clever young lady, whom I met on my way up to Pretoria, was kind enough to describe to me at length the proper way to engage, or to attempt to engage, the affections of a Boer's daughter. The young Boer, who thinks that he wants a wife, and has made up his mind to look for one, begins by riding round the country to find the article that will suit him. On this occasion he does not trouble himself with the hard work of courtship, but merely sees what there is within the circle to which he extends his inspection. He will have dressed himself with more than ordinary care, so that any impression he may make may be favourable, and it is probable that the young ladies in the district know what he is about. But when he has made his choice, then he puts on his very best, and cleans his saddle, or borrows a new one, and sticks a feather in his cap, and goes forth determined to carry his purpose. He takes with him a bottle of sugar plums—an article in great favour among the Boers, and to be purchased at every store—with which to soften the heart of the mother, and a candle. Everything depends upon the candle. It should be of wax, or of some wax-like composition, but tallow will suffice, if the proposed bride be not of very high standing. Arrived at the door, he enters, and his purpose is known at once. The clean trousers and the feather declare it, and the sugar plums, which are immediately brought forth, and always consumed, leave not a doubt. Then the candle is at once offered to the young lady. If she refuse it, which my informant seemed to think was unusual, then the swain goes on without remonstrating, and offers it to the next lady upon his list. If she take it, then the candle is lighted, and the mother retires, sticking

a pin into the candle as an intimation that the young couple may remain together, explaining their feelings to each other, till the flame shall have come down to the pin. A little salt, I was assured, was often employed to make the flame weak, and so prolong the happy hour. But the mother, who has perhaps had occasion to use salt in her own time, may probably provide for this, when arranging the distance for the pin. A day or two afterwards the couple are married, so there is nothing of the nonsense (?), and the occasional heartbreak of long engagements. It is thus that 'freying' is carried on among the Boers of the Transvaal."

CHAPTER VIII.


WINTER SCENE.



ONKER'S Hoek is the name of a valley that runs deep into the Drakenstein Mountains from Stellenbosch. It is an exceedingly prosaic name to have conferred upon such a lovely spot, but it is quite in keeping with the Africander practice of naming things from some trifling accident associated with them, or from some hasty impression, usually as realistic and unpoetic as can be imagined. Notwithstanding, it is perhaps the most picturesque glen in that magnificent range of mountains, that runs from the sea far into the interior—an overwhelming, infinite looking mass. In summer its aspect is barren and repelling, since summer in that part of South Africa is the dry season. There is nothing in the bare precipices and stifling heat to excite the enthusiasm necessary sympathetically to explore it. But on the approach of winter a gradual transformation in the appearance of the country takes place. The light patches of cloud that suddenly appear towards the middle of April in the northern sky, and float dreamily, but gracefully southward, like ships on the bosom of the atmospheric ocean, to discharge their precious burdens of rain on the parched country, are the harbingers of this change. Heavier rains follow; the dried-up courses of the mountain brooks begin to be filled with silvery streams; the leaves begin to fall from the oak and poplar trees; the oppressive heat gives place to a more bracing temperature; the vineyards

lose their leafy covering, and take on the raw appearance of a ploughed field; the uncultivated land begins to be decked with a luxuriance of winter plants. Thus, about the beginning of May, winter has fairly asserted itself, and will do so until September. Although it is called the rainy season, we must not infer from this that it continuously rains during that time, for there are intervals of days, and sometimes weeks, of the most lovely weather, when the sky is all radiant with sunshine, the air pure and invigorating, and nature exquisitely adorned with flower and herb, and tempting us to ramble forth and inspect her beauty. To Jonker's Hoek, then, let us go,—that dark, narrow, secret-looking vale, where it would seem as if ours were the first thoughts that had as yet been formed of disturbing its repose.

The sun is just warm enough as we stroll forth, to make the air agreeable and walking a pleasure; the country so peaceful, after the storm of yesterday that thundered round those tall cliffs. There is a hum of music everywhere, especially in the narrow gorges, that run off from the picturesquely cultivated valley which we tread,—music, which is composed of the intermingled sounds of the everywhere gushing streams, the gentle breeze that rustles among the bushes, the notes of the softly cooing turtle dove, the bleating of the lambs on the hill-side, and the melancholy strains from a Hottentot shepherd's horn. First we pass a number of immense oaks, bare and dead-like, out of sympathy seemingly with the season, and waiting with rugged patience for another. Then we leave the open ground and ramble on along the banks of the Eerst River, which perforates the seam of alluvial earth, compressed by economical nature into the narrow space between the mountains. It is frequently hidden from view, as it foams over its rocky and rapidly descending course, by the poplar and other trees



and bushes that cluster along its banks. At intervals the arable land becomes a little broader, and there we catch sight of several fine old farmhouses, peeping from the oaks and vineyards that surround them, like an ancient temple from the midst of its encircling grove. An idea strikes us,—we will atone for the tastelessness of those who profaned this spot with so common a name, by reviving the Greek custom of conferring upon any lovely vale the name of “Tempe.” Sure the Peneus was no more godlike, except in its name, than the Eerst River, nor Olympus and Ossa more divine, except in the superstitions of those mythic days, than the mystic peaks yonder, that stretch their serene and seared heads far above the valley of Jonker’s Hoek.

About two miles further the almost perpendicular mountains contract still narrower, so that there is little room left for civilisation to assert itself. At any rate there are no more farms, and the silence of ages reigns. It is beautiful, and a beauty not wasted, though there be no human being to appreciate it. Only the Creator Himself is poet enough to understand what it means, and there is a joyfulness everywhere, as if itself were its own admirer. High above our head is the everlasting rock, bare and grim,—the Sneuwkop, frowning above the others in front of it, is over 5000 feet, its weather-beaten head covered with snow. Lower down the first trees—the pine, doornboom, wild olive, blackwood—begin sparsely to hide the bleakness of the summits. The lower the eye travels, the thicker becomes the vegetation, with proportional increase in its verdure and brilliance; so that in your immediate neighbourhood you seem to be looking on every side on the tiers of richest flowers and bushes arranged in some conservatory. Especially prominent and lovely are the brilliant blooms of the cactus, crassulae, prickly pear, the large cup-shaped flower

of the sugar bush, from which an excellent syrup is made, and those of other flowers and shrubs, famed for glow of colour, such as the *Struthiola*, the *Gnidea*, the *Adenandra*. There are also numerous species of the *Iris*, of which the *gladiola* is perhaps the most conspicuous. But to specialise were to compose a mere botanical list, without bringing a vivid picture of the scene before the eye of the reader. So he must try to imagine that he is standing in the very paradise of flowers, and is at liberty to bring before his fancy as many of the 12,000 species, which the Cape is said to contain, as he chooses. He can hardly exaggerate.

Following a sheep-path through the rank growth, sometimes considerably above, sometimes on a level with the river, we suddenly stumble upon what is a singular joy—nothing less than a large bed of aroms or lily of the Nile, interspersed with maiden-hair and other ferns. It is a perfect model of freshest life associated with tenderest beauty, and this is surely the perfection of material existence. But there is the discrepancy of name again to mar the glorious effect of such a harmony, for the aro,—purest, richest of blooms,—has the horrible name of Pig Lily tied to it, the inhabitants of the land having discovered no more striking circumstance worthy of lending it a title, than the fact, that the pigs are exceedingly fond of it, and it is so common as to form a part of their food. Other beautiful species of the lily,—the *Agapanthus* or African Lily, the Guernsey Lily, the Berg Lily with purple flowers, are lurking about, the last, a modest thing, to be counted by millions, but loving the higher parts. One kind betrays itself by its pleasing odour—the *Kukuma-kranka*. It bears an elongated, club-shaped, orange-coloured fruit as well. If you are with a party of young Africans and the scent is started, there is a regular demonstration of excitement until the much loved object is found,—much

loved, because it imparts a pleasant odour to spirits. And here is the Pride of Table Mountain and the Muttercap, two of the twenty-five species of orchids that exist in South Africa. Contrasted with their sparseness and fineness is the overwhelming millions of a flower resembling the primrose, which completely hides or roots out the grass—a carpet on which we tread for over 100 yards. But even these hordes of humble but cheerful flowers are surpassed by the vast numbers of heaths, which meet us on ascending a little further on. Only on a heathery moor, or a hillside in bonny Scotland, could one have such a view, and perhaps this surpasses anything of the kind to be found even in Scotland, since, in addition to the heather, the finest heaths, which are only found there in hothouses, bloom here in the soft air and bright sunshine with the most splendid brilliance. One may wander for a distance of seven miles over the rough virgin soil in the Cape district, elevated here into gentle eminences, there into almost unexplored little glens, and pluck as many kinds of heaths as he has walked furlongs, until he is lost in admiration at the variety to be found within such space. Among the multitudes of other floral beauties, which formed a perfect *embarras de richesse*, and whose abundance almost tired the sense, we mention the Nightshade, the Heliotrope, the Evening Primrose, the Lady's Mantle, etc. etc. The Everlastings claim special mention. Their proper home is the everlasting hills, but a few specimens have ventured down into the vale. They are of all colours, from the glittering gold and sparkling silver, to the gentler pink and unassuming brown. Ornaments are made of them by the people living in the Caledon district, on whose mountains they thrive best. A cross or a crown so arranged is really a beautiful object,—the latter especially, from the idea to which the name of the flower gives rise. Unlike

the rushing of the water, or the sound of the wind, or the fleeting of the seconds, it points to something both beautiful and permanent. Must, then, this beauty of things around depart? Alas, the drought and scorching heat of summer are coming, and it, alone, will remain, and even it must be plucked to avoid destruction. Only the process of decay here is reversed,—it is the heat of summer that blasts, in the North the cold of winter!

We have but chronicled a thousandth part of all the plants that passed before our gaze. And now we are at the head of the valley. The two peaks on the left almost bend over us, and the mountain is like a wall on the right. In front, huge rocky heights obstruct the way, and were it not for the rank vegetation about us, that veil their grimness to some degree, it would be too like a prison to feel agreeable in such a scene. Wild beyond imagination and lonely, and yet, something broods over its ruggedness, which tempts us to sing with Coleridge:—

“ A green and silent spot among the hills,
A small and silent dell. O'er stiller place
No singing skylark ever poised itself.”


Yet not quite so silent, for from the distance there rolls along a noise as of rumbling vehicles. It is the Jonker's Hoek waterfall, the source of the Eerst River. A few hundred yards further and we stand in view of it. What a sight for Christopher North! How would his eye have lighted up and his poetic soul become enthusiastic, had he penetrated through the little gorge in front of it, thick with trees and bushes, and stood suddenly in a fairy grotto, containing the basin that receives the vast volume of water, after a descent over an enormous ledge of rock, of perhaps 300 feet! At the further end of the grotto is a narrow opening, through which we gazed into a recess, whose rough, slanting bottom receives the perpendicular fall of

the water before it passes into the receptacle in the grotto. It is a scene of indescribable grandeur, looking through this rent in the rock away over the slanting background and then up the cliff, the whole being covered by the rushing, foaming element, with here a bush, there a cushion of moss, and now a tuft of grass to diversify its surface. But no words can describe the soft beauty, the weird wildness, the shady solitariness of the grotto itself, in which the waters come to rest after the headlong rush downwards. Truly, we felt the truth of Max Müller's remark, "There are few sensations more pleasureable than that of wondering." Ferns of various kinds vegetate on the rocky sides of the grotto. The most verdant moss carpets its floor and overhangs, like fairy tapestry, its walls. Leafy trees, with branches intertwined, hang over the opening in the roof, admitting a stray ray of the sun, to give the dark water a red wine colour. Tiny jets trickle from the long moss, delightfully tempering the air, and exciting a luxuriance of plants wherever a little soil has been deposited,—even the rock seems to become fertile in such a charmed spot, and yields many a rare botanical specimen. If such a scene had been still, we should not have spoken above our breath; for it seemed sacred; but the continual rush and splash of the water, intermingled with the sound of the falling drops from the dripping moss, made a wild kind of music, which drowned our loudest accents, and celebrated the wonders of creation in strains, which a musical soul could interpret as a song of praise, such as that which arose, when the foundations of the earth were laid, and "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

We must make a selection of mosses and ferns in remembrance, and then with reluctance retire. Something more we take with us, however,—a feeling of beautiful originality, which is increased rather than diminished, by the old objects,

that pass before us as we saunter down the glen. The world is still worthy of the Creator, and perhaps more than worthy of man—sunken as he often is. If you wish to make proof of this, go and open your soul to the charms of Jonker's Hoek.

On the "stoep" of that farmhouse there sits an old man, a very fine-looking old man, and his mild, sympathetic eye tempts to intercourse, for silence is painful when impressions are so teeming, and song is beyond our faculty. His name is Watermeyer, he says, and so long has he honourably borne it, that he is bending now to the grave. And yet, he has a keen consciousness of these beautiful surroundings, and knows he is richer far than many a duke or prince in his fatherland (he is of German descent), in possessing the greater part of this beautiful glen. It is a thatched house, of venerable exterior and most comfortable interior. Old furniture and modern pictures in the dining and drawing-room, and a fine hospitable matron, an accomplished daughter and two stalwart sons to make it blessed. There is eating and drinking, and talking and music, and bits of information about Yonker's Hoek and its ancient farms, cultivated some of them by the first colonists twenty years ago. The wine goes round—Cape and French—excellent both, and laughter resounds, and another feeling takes possession alongside of that with which we left the grotto—that of friendship, sudden but hearty. It is the rule of the land, where ceremony is not allowed to spoil the ancient virtue of hospitality. And, yet, there is the utmost refinement among our friends, and we wished they had asked us to stay for the night, for evening in the glen, they tell us, is unspeakably lovely. Star and moon seem to hang in its roof of soft sky—and we should have liked to talk of the far off old Fatherland with its mystic traditions and wealth of thought and song. How the scene



would have suited, and dear forms might have approached from the far away, and joined their joyful presence. Reluctantly we say adieu, carrying with us again a feeling, that of melancholy, which tried to find utterance in Heine's romantic song:—

“ Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin,
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.
Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,
Und ruhig fliesset der Rhein,
Der Berges Gipfel funkelt
Im Abend-Sonnenschein.”

As we emerge on an eminence from the valley, we pause a little, to survey the scene below. It is a magnificent winter panorama,—the ocean rolling with rapid, foaming current round Cape Point; the town of Stellenbosch with adjoining hamlets, picturesque and gracefully irregular; the mountains glowing with the crimson rays of the setting sun; the woods of silvertrees, their delicate tints contrasting with the fiery glow of the mountains; the numerous farmhouses, reposing in some still glen, or perched on the slope of some hillside. Numerous ploughs, drawn by long teams of oxen or mules, are still at work turning up the soil, and soon these patches of cultivated land will be verdant with the sprouting corn and wheat, and so will add to the general freshness of the wild scenery. Large bands of coloured people are busy pruning and digging the vineyards and orchards, or enlarging them by planting young vines and fruit-trees in portions of soil reclaimed from its savage state. The gardens bloom with flowers and vegetables, although it must be observed, that taste in gardening—a characteristic of some northern peoples—contrary to what one might expect, is anything but common among these inhabitants of the South. The flower-garden usually takes

the form of a circle, whose circumference is not always, by a far way, at equal distance from its centre, and which is usually daubed over in a careless fashion, with a few common European annuals, instead of being adorned with specimens of their country's rich flora.

As the night comes down, and the stars peep out, and the frogs begin to croak, and the Hottentot workman goes contently to his hut, and the mountains repose, and the good folks smile at you from their "stoeps," you pass on with a happy heart, and pity the unprivileged mortals, that have never rambled in Yonker's Hoek on a winter's day.

CHAPTER IX.

NIGHT ON THE MOUNTAINS.



HE coast of the colonised part of South Africa may be said to form an imperfect semi-circle, with a curvature, abrupt toward the west, but more gradual towards the east. The same may be said of many of its mountains. They stretch down from the north as far as Cape Point, and then bend in various ranges, first eastwards and then northwards, until they touch the sources of the Nile. As they go, they shoot into multitudes of branches and detached hills, which vary the surface of the interior, enclosed by this sometimes double, sometimes triple wall. Consequently you may wander where you like throughout the vast tracts of the interior of South Africa, and you have towards the horizon in nearly every direction a view which, in varied grandeur, can often compare with that on the Bernese Oberland, while travelling from Berne to Bâle. The sun and the verdure may be wanting—they are scorched and sterile-looking—but the panorama of lofty peaks, fearful precipices, dark gullies, great silent masses without distinct points, often treeless and waterless, but ever majestic, presents an overwhelming idea of the magnificent and awful. Unless the heat or the distance be very great, there is seldom any haze or mist to render the view of them indistinct. And as with the whole, so with the parts. Every bush in the dark kloofs, every boulder and cavern on the hillsides, almost every considerable weather-beaten furrow on the

face of the precipices, is clearly perceived. There are few more wonderful sights than the Kamiesberg on the west, the Drakenstein, Zwartebergen, Outeniqualand Bergen on the south-east, the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld, and Sneeuwbergen in the centre, and the Stormberg and Drachensberg on the north-east of the Cape Colony. There was a time, geologists tell us, when this was all strangely different, when the Karroos at their base were inland lakes, bordered by an umbrageous flora that stretched up their sides, when the deep gorges that cleave them were not yet torn up by the floods, that escaped through them to the sea, when, if the sandstone, limestone, granite, etc., of which they are composed—pointing back in some cases to the Silurian, in others to the Devonian, in others to the Carboniferous periods—speak truly, this was a real mountainous land—a Switzerland, with its snow, and cloud, and forest, and flood, and verdure. But both the soft beauty and hoarse storm of an Alpine region have long since disappeared, and now a serene ruggedness and silent mysteriousness reign from sharp peak and rounded summit, only disturbed now and then by a summer's thunderstorm or winter's blast. Such solitude and air of mystery aloft yonder excites curiosity and inspires reverence. It led the Israelites, in days of religious decay, when the visible was more powerfully impressive than the invisible, to build altars on their summits; it leads the Kaffirs to fix on them as abodes of the rain or thunder god; and the Africanders, to get up mountain hunting parties, in which the love of the chase mingles with a taste for the novelty of camping by night on a mountain top. In going on such an expedition, we were moved by the second inducement, for, to be frank, our shooting powers, never much exercised, were too harmless to allow us to be much more than a mere spectator of the hunt.

It was evening towards the latter part of a winter after-

noon. From early morning we had been roaming through a wild country, clad in huntsman's trim—i.e., in the oldest and roughest garments to be had—ever ascending, now over bushy, grassy "veldt," now across stony ridge. We had left the farms of the rich vale far below, hours behind, and now at the dusky hour of five o'clock fate found us amid the fastnesses of the mountains, that cluster in magnificent profusion between the Berg River on the one hand, and the Breede River on the other. Below, at moderate distances, were the towns and villages of Worcester, Ceres, Tulbagh, Wellington, Goudinie, and farther landwards Robertson and Swellendam. It had been a worthy Cape winter day—not a cloud in heaven's serene dome, which looked as if a million mirrors were flashing rays of light earthwards—not an ounce of moisture in the air—hardly a motion of wind—nature blooming in deepest, healthiest green—withal a glad-some, crisp, peaceful day, yea, a very ideal of a day, fit to be eternal. You have the stirring consciousness of life, and feel that you must move on—if possible not on a flat, but up a hillside, the steeper the better, until the deer understand by your look that you are a poet and no huntsman, and stand by and enjoy it quietly with you.

The ardour of our friends for the chase, and ours for going further, without other aim than that of moving so freely amid so much freedom and beauty, had allowed us only a short time for repast in the middle of the day—"biltong," cold mutton, wine, and bread. By that time we had reached solitary enough tracts to sight now and then small troops of baboons, large and hideous, and giving vent to yells of astonishment, mingled with curiosity, at our approach. The stray shots, which the impertinence of their comportment excited, sent them scampering among the rocks and bushes with still louder yells of execration, until a halt was called at a safe distance, and a consultation held. The

expression of opinion was very animated indeed. Such demonstrations came to nothing, however—the cowardly brutes slipping away, more frightened than provoked by our derisive cries. And these are our ancestors! Well, science may be clever, but it is hardly æsthetic.

Anon there crossed our path more beautiful specimens of the animal world. Small parties of the rheebock, steinbok, and klipspringer furnished good sport. These deer, unlike the noble antlered animals in the Highlands of Scotland, have straight, smooth horns; in the case of the first, from 9 to 10 inches long; in the case of the others, about half that length. Whilst there are about twenty-seven kinds of antelope throughout South Africa, only these three are to be found spread over the whole country, the rest being limited to certain portions, usually further north. Hence the abundance of these three varieties here; and this being a day such as they love to roam about in, their picturesque groups were frequently perceived grazing among the bushes, or bounding spiritedly among the stones. Over the higher precipices the eagle might occasionally be seen soaring, and above the bushes in the kloofs the hawk or the falcon. Numerous coveys of partridges were raised and fired at with good result, and several times a pheasant, bustard ("korhaan"), and secretary bird were brought down. The last is a fine stately bird, most useful in destroying snakes, and therefore prohibited by a heavy penalty from being shot; but as well command the stones to turn into bread, as expect a keen huntsman, in obedience to the doctrine of utility, to resist the temptation of taking aim at so splendid an object. In addition to these, there were plenty of smaller birds of the most brilliant plumage, but not prized as game,—sunbirds and finches, with no power of song, like our sweet northern warblers. Dull creatures they must surely be, to remain mute under such a sky and amid such

scenery. Perhaps the gorgeousness of their surroundings may have had the same effect on them as luxury on the human constitution—dulling the sense, while decking the exterior. The numerous insects were far more lively and appreciative—butterflies, locusts, beetles, moths, bees, etc.—dancing and singing in the true spirit of the bright hour and the beautiful scene. These are South Africa's only poets. Pringle has just attempted to lisp its praises,—theirs its only lyric songs; and while they put to shame, with their merry flapping of wings, the silent birds, they throw a like rebuke to the unpoetic inhabitants of the vales below.

The scene is wonderfully, almost painfully varied. How bright the sky, but how indefinite is our feeling of its magnificence and hidden wealth! And the peaks and "kloofs" and vast rocks, and bushes and tiny flowers, and the different elevation and various combination of view! How delightful to watch the world grow larger and richer, and be conscious that it is not a worn-out sphere, but a storehouse of wonders! And so fresh—streams and cascades, bearers of purity and life, so that the tenderest flower and the mighty old olive can alike drink from them! Look out from our highest point of ascent,—everywhere something pleasing and grand,—something, in which the gentleness and goodness of the woman's eye blend with a strength, that is perfected in her counterpart. Now it is a sunset, and a sunset in these mountains is almost as fine as the Aurora in the far northern sky. The incipient red that first tinges their tops and sides, and reveals almost every twig and stone with marvellous distinctness, gradually deepens into glowing crimson, as the full force of the fiery rays of the setting sun strikes them, at first lower down, but gradually ascending to the top, until the long line of the range's summit suddenly seems to burst into flame. For a few

minutes this red is most intense, and the transformation from its previous grey perfect. Then follows with every few seconds a slight change, all the shades of red being passed through as at the commencement, but in reversed order—and then the dark shadows of coming night begin to replace the pale grey of the last rays—the hue of one recovered from a fierce excitement,—and calm takes possession of them, and night soon hides their rough features from view! Thereupon we prepared to bivouac, and it was night on the mountains.

The spoils of the day having been collected and counted, a fire was kindled in a sheltered corner of the high elevation that had been reached, and the provision bags again opened. Our attendants soon had strong coffee ready, and with Cape “sausati” and bread, a very merry meal was enjoyed, finished with a few glasses of Haanepoot, which, when old, is said to be the finest of Cape wines. It resembles in taste a very fair Madeira. Its influence, aided by that of the day’s exciting ramble, caused tale and joke to go round the circle with increasing verve. One retailed the hunting exploits of his forefathers, handed down from father to son in Cape families, as traditions which must be known and revered almost as much as sacred history. Those were the dangerous days of the lion, elephant, and rhinoceros, the buffalo and hippopotamus, so numerous then, though all banished now to the far interior, that it could be written in 1653—“This night it appeared as if the lions would take the fort (at Cape Town) by storm.” A good per cent. of all the triumphs and horrors narrated might well have had their origin in the fancy of the perfervid narrator; but it was too weird in the solitude and darkness there to distinguish between fact and fiction. Another told of encounters with Hottentots in early, and with Kaffirs in later times,—sensational, of course, but very tragic and sad. Another

detailed experience of witches and ghosts in lonely places by old wives and aged seers, but they wanted the thrill and imagery of the German "Mährchen," or the Scotch hobgoblin tale. Another described a love tragedy, which had taken place in our immediate neighbourhood. A fifth followed with a picture of the social life of the Dutch period. There were two great entertainments annually, one in February, at the leaving of the East India homeward-bound fleet, when the officers were magnificently entertained, and one in October, when the burgher force had gone through its yearly training. The latter was celebrated with games, music, and dancing, and eating and drinking to excess, drunkenness being gravely provided for in the preparations made for the feast.

A radiance in the east, and now the moon is there—more a sun than a satellite in resplendence. Swan like she ascends above the far distant horizon, and as about the bird, so about her, there is something queen like. The gloom is quickly changed with the soft light, and then the vast area of mountain-top and plateau is again revealed, with the ruggedness of their features toned down by the mellow rays. Moonlight on sea or lake, on moor or fertile vale is exquisite; but here? How to picture the aspect of the heavens, which at this height are seen with far greater distinctness and in greater extent than on the plain below, and which glitter from end to end with orbs, whose magnitude and brilliance, he that has not seen them, can form no idea of! The Southern Cross is, perhaps, the chief object of curiosity, and there are several others towards the same quarter almost as well defined. Such lofty speechful silence, such supramundane glory, such number and variety! With awestruck gaze, the beholder turns to the other directions. Northwards the pole has disappeared, and new stars—Hydra, Centaurus,—surprise the eye, expecting to recognise familiar

objects. Glorious thousands spangle east and west. It is as if we must hear voices on all sides, dispelling the mystery of so much grandeur, and making us feel in contact, through beautiful matter, with the sphere of eternal spirit. This is the spot for mystic dreams, perhaps a new revelation, if there be a mind great enough to interpret the glorious vista. An ordinary soul cannot adequately grasp its impressions as it loses itself in the ascent, and comes back with but a faint notion of infinite majesty. The earth is as hushed as the sky; some event brewing, surely, worthy of the magnificent arena before us. Into the far distance strike the mountain lines, mild in feature and unperturbed, like some great giant in his sleep. Reposing, too, are bush and rock, and all the jagged peaks have lost their stiffness and are soft and tender as a woman's eye. Motionless every shadow—like an evil spirit chained to the spot, while benevolence and beauty hold possession. The "kloofs" below, full of darkness, might yet only be the darkened chamber of some good fairy, with peace for its pillow and love in its dreams. Further off in the direction of the sea, the great plain looks like a bed of down. It is the moment

"When in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart."

There is meaning in things finite at such a moonlight hour, and their words intelligible, while those of the sky may be too high to be understood. What resemblances there are in this world—how many a face in a far-off land have we mistaken for that of a dear, but distant friend! And that glen down there, buried in deep shade, to fond imagination, how like to a certain dark Highland vale, dear to think on from its associations with home and childhood!

It all seems a familiar scene under the northern sky, where we are rambling in frolicsome play, or keeping watch at the trysting place! Its speech is upon its lips,—listen, ye sleepers, below and around us. He that looks upon nature, whether it be the earth or the universe, as his fatherland, is a citizen of an universal kingdom, and will draw no line beyond which all are barbarians, but will find resemblances in nature and humanity, sufficient to break down the barriers between man and man, people and people, continent and continent, colour and colour, and to banish the feeling of alien from among the members of that family of human beings, which a heart, in sympathy with physical geography, let alone other considerations, must feel to be one! Look up daily to those peaks, that tower above your land, and they will teach you charity, which, it is to be feared, you are more inclined to practice towards your ostriches than towards your human, though oftentimes repugnant, black neighbours. That is the spirit, which makes all things sympathetically related, as if we were but parts of one whole. Yet what differences! Thou art but a heap of matter, chained to thy mountainous sphere; we, spirit, conscious of power to ascend and progress to the infinite! And what contradictions! The landscape is that of Africa, but the tongue that of Holland, and Holland is so flat, and its language so harsh! Here must rather sound the soft, melancholy Kaffir, for here are no seadykes and canals, but mountains and stars and gods! How great, though, that little marshy flat of the North Sea, that its name and its influence have reached unto here. Greater in its past than states thirty times its size, and far more imposing now. Even yet to the Boers here it is a mighty land, the centre around which their thoughts of Europe cluster, of whose history they can tell such tales. It is, with reference to its present state, but ignorant and amus-

ing exaggeration; nevertheless, it reminds of a time when it was the Northern Venice, and when these mountains were the witnesses of a courage, energy, wealth, influence, genius, which nations, then almost unknown, are now apt to forget. Strange it may seem to the unmindful world. Here it is still a fact,—a vanished greatness reappears and the world has gone back a century or two. Vondel and Bilderdijk, De Ruiter and De Witt, William and Maurice,—composing, fighting, and ruling,—after all, it seems as if history had a temple on the lone hills around.

How greathearted one feels when face to face with such vastness! How our little conceits vanish, and we are ready to confess the meanness of our character in contrast to the breadth and exalted strength of that energy in things so splendid as these! Their calm and freedom, where to find their like? Down there are nations hating each other, individuals striving with each other, churches persecuting each other, selfishness in those thousand forms, that go to make the great disharmony of life! This might be the heavenly spot where again might be heard, "Peace on earth and goodwill to men." The Father of all might now anew reveal Himself. Things await His speech, whilst men will have their say with the dogmatic confidence, that each is the prophet and the others but dreamers. And His speech is, that there is a million qualities in the Divine heart and mind, which the little soul of man misses in himself, and which he must look for in the broader area of nature, where small feelings and smaller opinions cannot limit their breadth. Our theology would oft have God love the Christian but not the Kaffir, would excommunicate progressive, and chrystalise ill-thinking; our social customs would make rules and barriers to tyrannise over human conduct; our science would dogmatise over the formulas of eternal truths, and so on; but do they often leave the four walls of some

study and look deep into the face of the sky, and away over mountain chain and valley, and has the great-hearted spirit of their charity breathed into them? How hard to descend on the morrow and thus do!

The evening grows old, and it is nearly midnight. A change begins to brood in the north-west, and by and bye a gusty breeze springs up, and the clouds move lightly about, now nestling around a peak; now wafted gracefully past. Shadows come and go. A low moaning passes from crag to crag and the bushes in the crevices begin to be affected, each greeting its neighbour, as if they had passions and self-consciousness, as Erasmus Darwin would have it. That first music of the wind, as it strikes on a thousand objects, how beautiful it is! 'Tis the tender introduction to the fearful fury of the later storm, a sad, warning, pitying note to passive nature. Already it has increased its strength, so as to whirl the clouds athwart the moon and across the summits of the mountains, as if fleeing from some terrible Nemesis. And now it roars through the rocks and across the bare plateaus, with that mighty noise, which to hear in the valleys below, is like listening to crashing thunder. Now may the maiden stand at the window and raise her evening prayer for the absent betrothed, that has to struggle in forest or "kloof" with the maddened blast. Such the scene when Agathe watches for Max and hopes and pleads—

“ O wie hell die goldnen Sterne,
Mit welch reinem Glanz sie glühn,
Nur dort in der Berge Ferne
Scheint ein Wetter auf zu ziehn.
Dort im Wald auch schwebt ein Heer
Dunkler Wolken, dumpf und schwer.
Zu Dir, wende
Ich die Hände
Herr, ohn Anfang und ohn Ende,
Vor Gefahren
Uns zu wahren,
Sende deine Engel Schaaren ! ”

No star is visible now, and yet it is not very dark, but the dim light of the hidden moon only serves to add to the grandeur of the storm. By it the movement of the masses of vapour in the air, black, with white edges, can be distinctly perceived. It is like watching from its bottom the surface of a sea, furiously agitated. Anon the fierce, steady blast passes, and fitful gusts follow, coursing over rock, and down into gully, and up the side of peak, like a tidal wave that cannot stop, till it find something to destroy. That deafening sound, as if a house had fallen, is a token, that its waxing force has found its victim. At intervals the lightening gleams over the distant heights, more in play than in earnest; sharp showers drive earthwards; the gloom increases; the elemental war becomes fiercer; the atmosphere presses upon the earth; an eerie, eerie sight is this, and we crouch down in our sheepskin at the foot of the rock, beside our crouching friends, and think of Faust and Mephistopheles in the Walpurgis Nacht, the tempest in Lear, and the lake storm in William Tell. Something of the spirit of Faust steals over one, and you are afraid to look round, lest you see a cloven foot or a staring cur. Still an irresistible longing seizes one to reach the deeper being, which you fancy is in the wild scene. It would indeed be natural, were a spirit now to hold converse, and you feel dissatisfied at its absence. Then you begin to fancy, and they are almost there,—certainly at the back of the stone,—then you are half a seer, and begin to address the Deity, and the celestial agencies hovering around you in the more solemn spirit of prayer, and have the feeling, as in if a revelation were struggling for light within you. Then you worship and muse on omnipotence and omnipresence, and then, the weather having calmed almost as quickly as it became disturbed, you fall asleep.

CHAPTER X.

CHARACTER AND NATURE.




UCH a bustle! Screeching of steam-winch-
es; the rumble of lorries and cabs; the hurried
movements of passengers, hunting handbags
and hat-boxes; the stream of hurrying
Kaffirs, bearing sacks and chests between
that shed and the steamer's edge, ever patient and unre-
monstrating under its increasing burden! But we are in
an animated mood, and feel in sympathy with all this noisy
animation, for this is the morning of a two months' holiday,
and we stand on the saloon deck of the R.M.S. "Moor,"
lying in dock at Cape Town, rejoicing in the prospect of a
trip round the coast to Mossel Bay, and thence by cart to
George Town, and adjacent parts of South Africa. Date—
the beginning of September 1882. Weather—bright and
breezy. Companion—a fellow-student from Stellenbosch,
T—— by name, who has kindly invited us to share in his
visit to the old home after a three years' absence. We
cannot rest long in a strange country without endeavouring
to form wide acquaintance with its people, scenery, manners,
resources, etc. A man might be a lifetime in his native
land and, for want of that enterprising curiosity, excited by
travel, be conscious of no particular desire to explore it.
But let him step upon foreign soil, and if he is of an
inquiring turn of mind, there is no rest for the sole of his
foot till he has seen everything of interest in it. Such is
the rousing effect of a great change. He is awakened to

the fact of great and varied realities in the world by that wonder, which is the mother of philosophy.

An hour and a half longer of this bustle has not made the morning very old, and we move out of dock into Table Bay, glad to be rid of Cape Town and its vexing dust and smallpox. It is a magnificent prospect, looking back on the fine circular sweep of the shore, the town, and the mountain; but soon we glide out of the Bay and head for Cape Point, coasting along about a mile from the Twelve Apostle Mountains, that extend to the farthest extremity of Africa. These are frightfully rugged and menacing, but the sea laughs, and the steam is defiant, and so we can survey their grimness without being much affected by it.

The "Moor" is continuing her journey from England to the eastern ports of the colony. Consequently to many of her passengers, who have just come out, everything wears the charm of novelty. They are loud in their expressions of admiration of mountain, water, and sky, but it is the old story of mere staring and exclaiming, without original appreciation. We prefer to retire to a quiet corner, and let such grandeur and freshness speak to the soul. Our speech is mere babble in such a scene—"nice," "beautiful," "charming," "delightful," and so on; theirs—almighty and entrancing. What they are, absorb and assimilate, and bring forth in life. That is better, and so again silence is golden.

Now we are rounding the Point, and must have a promenade before luncheon. The sea, flooded with the rays of the sun, is ruffled into pretty high frills by the wind. Out of sympathy, our thoughts are vivid. If life would but resemble that beautiful sail on the heaving ocean with its laughing waves! An ever calm sea will not do. There would be too much melancholy and monotony. Nor will a wild, infuriated one suit. There would be no passive



enjoyment, which must mingle with the movement of life. No; it must neither be too calm nor too stormy. It must be like the sea as it is to-day—bright, lively, musical—move ever on with smile and sparkle.

At Cape Agulhas the rolling increased, this being ever the most lively and, in stormy weather, one of the most dangerous points of these parts. It has towering mountains in its neighbourhood—in fact, all along the coast of South Africa you are struck with the wild, free, massive mountain scenery—surely the home of strength and independence. By the next morning we had not outrun them. They seemed to keep pace with the coast. Which would win the race we had not then an opportunity of judging; for here is Mossel Bay, our landing place. We get into a little boat, and in about ten minutes are standing on the jetty. The sail from Cape Town has lasted about twenty-four hours. Mossel Bay, so named from the vast quantities of mussels found in the sea here, is a scorched-looking little place. The want of water is very noticeable. Its streets are very dusty; its immediate surroundings arid. It is a hive of industry, however, as it is the outlet for the productions of a vast stretch of country behind it, including the districts of Swellendam and Riversdale. Among the precipices near Cape St. Blaise, the western extremity of the Bay, there is a remarkable cave, about 400 feet above the sea, which is reached by a dangerous path. Its floor is covered with mussels. About 50 feet higher is a smaller one, containing no shells, however. Barrow and Lichtenstein, who both visited it, have quarrelled over the explanation of the presence of mussels in the larger one. But we incline to agree with the latter that they were brought by Hottentots, who had taken up their abode here and used them as food.

We found a Cape cart, drawn by two horses and driven by a Hottentot, waiting us. This was to be our conveyance,

for the rest of the journey, to our friend's home at George Town, distant about six hours. Our route lay near the shore for the first two hours, over a dusty road, lined by thick brushwood on either side. On that next the sea, the surveyors were busy taking measurements for the railway to George Town, Oudtshoorn, and Port Elizabeth. On the beach we could see many old hulks, remnants perhaps of East Indiamen, which too frequently fell a victim here to the furious south-east wind and the dangerous reefs and sandbanks. Streams of transport waggons passed us. In the absence of the railway, these form the only means of keeping up trading communications between such business centres as Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn. They are ponderous, heavily-constructed, lumbering objects, drawn by teams of sixteen or eighteen oxen, two abreast, and carry from six to ten tons. In passing, you have to go through a perfect nimbus of dust.

We crossed several rivers, some of them but waterless tracks, and, after a three hours' ride, got down at Braak River Hôtel, to rest the horses and refresh ourselves. T—here rushed into the embrace of two or three young ladies, cousins and old school companions—for Afrianders, like French, Germans, and Italians, are very demonstrative in their feelings. We had to stand by and content ourselves with the kind words of welcome of their amiable mother. They had so much to talk about old experiences and family affairs that we felt entirely out of it. So we strolled out, to view the river and the "kloof" through which it flowed. It was about half-a-mile from the sea. The great rollers of the flowing tide dammed back the water, and made the river a little lake. A splendid harbour it would have formed, only that bane of all South African rivers—the sandbank at their mouth—made it hopeless to attempt to bring a vessel up. In the act of enjoying the lovely scenery, our

attention was distracted to the Hottentot driver. He was surveying us with a curious look, and seemed rather nervous. His trepidation increased as we approached, and he edged round to the other side of the cart. "Evidently still savage," was our first thought, and yet he looked a tame Hottentot—his clothes, well-worn but whole, sitting on him, as if he quite approved of their presence. He himself unravelled the mystery by exclaiming on our threatening a nearer move:—"De pokken, Baas, de pokken." By this time he looked quite horror-struck, and then it dawned on us that the poor man had heard that the pox were in Cape Town, and had allowed his imagination to run away with his courage, at the mere possibility of our bringing the disease with us. They are terribly afraid of it, for it has wrought severe ravages throughout South Africa at intervals. Hence his terror. When we took out a little packet of carbolic powder, to assure him that this was a thorough disinfectant, his horror was as great as our amusement, and he could only be reconciled to the prospect of further journeying with us, after the reassurances of our friends that it was quite safe. He nearly ran his head through the canvas roof of the cart, when we afterwards put one of the packets under his nose.

After leaving Braak River, the road ascends in winding fashion the sides of a steep, dark "kloof." Looking back, it seemed like an enormous snake, basking in the sun among the bushes. We breathed more freely, when our sparring animals reached the top. Thereafter a green, undulating country, extending away to the sea on the one hand; to the green range of the Outeniqualand Mountains on the other. A large number of small farms were dotted over its surface. About them, T—— and the driver got through a large amount of small talk. In such circumstances, the circle of your interests widens, and so we were an interested sharer in the

conversation about marriages and deaths, disputes and scandals, which concerned the simple Boers, through whose habitations we were passing.

It was late in the evening, when we reached our destination. It is a curious moment, arriving at a strange place in the dusk—a moment of surmisings. There is such a mystery about the most common things—the smallest cot, the tall trees, the ill-defined groups of onlookers, the muffled mountains, the giant shadows. You feel as if you saw such objects for the first time, and accord them the reverence of wonder. But such feelings were quickly dispelled by the warm grasp of many hands, eagerly extended to welcome, when we stepped into the drawing-room of T.'s home. There was all the lively excitement and familiarity of tone, which such leal-hearted Afrianders never fail to show towards a worthy stranger. For the time being you are their son; you share the confidence of the family; their joys and cares alike they communicate, and expect the same on your part. They spare no pains to make you feel agreeable. They bear with enthusiasm the self-imposed burdens of a boundless hospitality.

And now to visit the long array of relatives of every possible grade. This is the occupation of the first week or two; for in South Africa such family duties hold a high place. They were fairly modernised people, but with nothing so original about them as to leave striking impressions. It was not so with their place of abode. The more we saw of George Town, the more were we charmed. First of all, it has superb surroundings. The green range of the Outeniqualand Mountains, so named from a Hottentot tribe, the Outeniquas, whose territory this district once formed, towers from 4,000 to 5,000 feet on the one hand; the great stretch of the Indian Ocean lies on the other, while in its immediate neighbourhood tangled forests and green mea-

dows expand themselves. Unlike the Drakenstein range, so bare and rocky looking, the Outeniquas are clothed with wood and grass, a fact which afforded a most agreeable change of prospect, reminding of the green hills of the North. This abundance of verdure is accounted for by the presence of a damp sea atmosphere, their situation towards the cool South, which prevents the evaporation of the moisture, and thus the large formation of cloud on their high summits, sending down numerous streams into the valleys. The country here about is therefore adapted for the production of corn and the rearing of cattle. Ostrich farming also is extensively carried on, and the forests, clothing the hills between this and the Knysna, a lovely spot, eight hours to the east, in the mountain country around Plettenberg Bay, still further eastwards, furnish an inexhaustible supply of timber, which is shipped to various parts of the colony.

The village itself has a quiet, quaint, easy-going appearance. The broad avenues, which form its streets, are lined with splendid oaks, and many places are wholly grown over with grass. In the business part there is a fine hotel, and some large, fashionable shops, but in general the houses wear a retired demeanour, well hidden by the shade of trees and gardens, from the passer by. The chief interest centres, of course, around the church, the courthouse, and the schools. The first stands in a peaceful spot—an old churchyard, reposing under venerable trees—at the top of the village. It is built in the form of a cross, with a high spire, and has a sacred, venerable look, and a comfortable interior. The other buildings are very plain-looking, and, with the exception of the English Church, a small Gothic structure, the art of architecture makes no further pretension to impress the sense. It is the air of sweet simplicity lingering about the whole, pleasingly affecting the manners.

of the people—observable about so many Swiss and German villages—that charms.

What, then, about the present themes of converse? Such a place, however placid apparently, has doubtless its underground workings and unconscious pulsations, which affect the way in which its inhabitants live and move and have their being. Certainly, and for the moment our little existence too. Our mode of thinking and the little world of our interests and diversions depend so much upon time and circumstances. We imagine that we make them; they form us unconsciously, even the smallest of them. Well, the school board has been having a regular set-to lately, and the whole drama has to be re-enacted at every home we visited, so that if you cannot sympathetically repeat it, 'tis not for want of drilling. One thinks the schoolmaster's salary is too large in proportion to the diligence with which he performs his duties. Hereupon a half-day's wrangle and the loss of much spleen, and the frequent breaking of that terse prohibition in the Sermon on the Mount, which one so often witnesses in the polite company of miners and cattle drovers. But the argument is shaky, and requires the weight of a "big word" now and then to steady it. But, by all the shades of his half-dozen departed helpmeets, there is this morning a rumour abroad, that that solemn-faced old Boer, who last Sunday stood at the Kirk door assiduously beckoning the flock onwards, is about to be betrothed to Juvrouw So-and-so, widow for the fourth time, with a view,—if the Lord so will—to enter for the seventh and (D.V.) last time the holy estate of wedlock! There is wrath among the gentle sex. Emphatic epithets glide smoothly from tongues, which exercise has accustomed to shoot off the heaviest adjectives, with the neatest grace and ease. And now there is a wrangle, accompanied by a heightening of colour, for somebody has been found to put


in a word on the other side—"Oom Piet? That shrunken-faced, thick-lipped, toothless old Blue Beard? The father of twenty children and erstwhile husband of six wives? And an elder? I'll to the "predikant" about it! And as for Tante Molly!" Mrs. Tondeldoosje here clean stuck, being out of breath.

Yesterday was Oom Paul's birthday. This is a great occasion. The old patriarch has about as many descendants as Jacob, and they all reverently flock to do their venerable progenitor reverence. The increase since last year is presented. There is much feasting and drinking, and long, solemn speeches, in which the name of the Deity is much bandied about. Everybody must speak. There are some laughable specimens of oratory, especially in the case of the young Boer, who proposes the ladies,—a host of fair cousins, and begins by lamenting his inability as an orator, proceeds to expatiate thereon, and ends by asking them to excuse his troubling the company so long. Of the ladies, never a word, and yet the toast is drunk with enthusiasm. Even the stranger must fetch forth some remarks. Happily his sympathies are wide, so he extols with the tenderest familiarity all the virtues of his host, and fondly lingers over the ancient graces of the old "tante." Then he declaims on the other members of the family and their affairs with the confidence of a family solicitor. You could imagine he had been educated in the district school. But then he has satisfied the good souls, and kept the speech ball rolling. However, after half-a-dozen hours of it, he wishes a famine might arise among the inexhaustible supply of toasts.

The latest sensation, besides a few engagements, which have ruffled the dreams of some of the young folks, is the last exploit in argument of that eccentric Oom, whose hobby is theological speculation. It has as startling an effect as

an important telegram in an evening paper, shouted at every corner by the news boys in some large European town. It is a fact, that he stood for three hours with his back against an oak tree, defending the principle, against our assertion to the contrary, that the earth is a stationary plane. "If it were not, but a revolving ball, would he not require to hold on to the tree? If he jumped up near the edge of some precipice, would he not tumble into infinite space, and be ever a falling body? If he went up in a balloon, should he not come down at New York? A revolving big orange? Heresy! Profanity! Did it not contradict the Bible? Enough of it for a good orthodox Christian, and may modern theology be accursed! It is the cause of all our droughts, famines, storms, calamities!" So this eccentric being reasoned. Meet him when you would, his greeting was a theological proposition, which he dared you to dispute. He and his wife had quarrelled some thirty years before, about as trifling a matter, as that worthy couple who swore eternal silence, because they could not agree which street took them quickest to their destination. It was most comical to see the couple eating, living, sleeping under the same roof, and yet addressing all their communications to their daughter. But such "thrawnness" and finesse of resolution are inseparable from the scholastic theologian, especially if he happen to be an old farmer, speculatively inclined.

It would be unjust to palm this off as a complete picture of George Town's social life. It has another side—pleasant, cultivated people; the worthy minister, for example—and pleasant diversions,—lawn tennis, concerts, excursions to sea and forest, long rides, etc. To-day it is an excursion to the sea-side—particular destination, Keiman's River Waterfall, in a wondrously grand ravine, they tell us. The company includes all the rank and fashion of the



town, from the minister and magistrate, down to Klaas, the driver of our conveyance. The dresses of the ladies luxuriate in bright colours. The conversation is a sort of intellectual lawn tennis, which they play when in good spirits.

The forest. So it is,—and there go the monkeys, swinging like squirrels from tree to tree, over our heads. To us this is one of the places that most teem with meaning. We seem to see poetry written athwart the trees, that never yet has been breathed. Antiquity broods in its recesses! The native pine and oak in silence there for ages, with only the elephant and the lovely touraco, with its green feathers, scarlet wings, and red bill, and countless insects, to enjoy it. For the Hottentots it was all ghostland, we suspect, which they would be shy of disturbing for fear of being caught away. By them, as by our Highland ancestors, many of the grandest scenes would be consigned to dwarfs and such eerie folks, and the spirit of man lost to consciousness of the wealth of beautiful sentiment and idea stored there. 'Twas different in old Germania, where the old Teutons roved in the woods, with the exception of one or two sacred to the Deity, and filled them with song and merry-making and love tales. But then they are a nation of poets and musicians. So it is often. We give the best to the evil powers, when it is in reality clothed with goodness, and make friends with that, which is often as brass is to gold in comparison. We are blind creatures with our superstitions and conceits. But there is a veritable demon here, perhaps two,—that asparagus, which the Dutch call *Wacht een bitje*, and which is tearing some of the fine dresses, and a horrid kind of lichen, which fastens on the trees and kills them. But there must ever be something or somebody to annoy, just when one is in the enjoyment of pleasing impressions, and some trouble to compress with deadly


grip, when life would pulse most freely. So a change of scene is desirable, and we rejoin the company which, with a few companions, we had left to visit the forest, and then jog on towards the waterfall.

It is a wonderful prospect from the brow of that eminence overlooking the sea and the ravine below, through which the Keiman's River finds an outlet. It was not considered desirable to descend in our conveyances, so the most of them were left at the top, and their occupants filed down on foot. Before doing so we take a look around. In front rolls the Indian Ocean, a sail waving here and there over its placid bosom, like an ostrich feather over a mirror. What a picture of dreamy vagueness, that softly moving mass! Around, the grassy "veldt," and peaceful farmhouses. Then suddenly a great dip downwards, over rock and tangled brushwood, 1500 feet at least. The tiny stream at its foot seemed to glide noiselessly along its course, as if frightened at the vast, rough giant, watching it on either hand. Through a narrow door it escaped into the sea, which to-day greeted it with the alluring touch of a gentle ripple. From above, the ravine seemed one huge cleft, of wedge form, such as we should set down as the eternal boundary between two countries; but on descending, we found a narrow strip of rich soil, through which the stream flowed. When the tide is full, part of this forms a little bay, calm as glass, however it may rage outside. The shore is strewn over with wonderful shells, the rocks with golden coral, in the form of little spires and flowery carpet. Mighty precipices frown alike to-day, when it is calm, and to-morrow, when it storms. But the greatest treat is in store. This is a most secluded nook in the ravine, entered through a rent in a great precipice. There is no way except by boat. Proceeding through the cleft by this means, and rounding a sharp ledge, you float into (it is too narrow to use oars) a

circular basin, almost roofed over by trees and ferns far above. A soft music falls upon the ear—the gentle trickle of a waterfall—now weak, but sometimes so mighty as to fill this spot with a fearful roar. We pluck snatches of maiden-hair and mosses, and would fall asleep to the lullaby of the waters, and be in our dreams a worshipper of the nymphs in this, their sylvan temple. It was too modern to eat mutton chop, and hear and make speeches over local topics after this. But an appetite, whetted by nature and the Dutch sense of courtesy, would not be denied. “And now for that elephant story, Oom Coos.” Oom thereupon draws his horny hand across his mouth, to clear away all particles of sandwiches, that might otherwise repress his volubility, and plunges into his subject. It is a great point that he accompanied Prince Alfred on an elephant hunt in the neighbourhood, and he lays particular stress on the fact, that it was his ball that killed his majesty of the forest, although he must, in accordance with etiquette, compliment the Prince on his having done it. Coos is a great authority, and when he says, that you must always aim at an elephant from a point above him, so as to give you the advantage in running away if you miss, we all believe him. Has he himself not often made the experiment, making you shudder at his narrow escapes? If still you be callous, remember the fate of that poor hunter, who was rash enough to neglect the usual precaution, firing from below and wounding the elephant, which pursued and overtook the unfortunate, and stamped his body into a jelly! His companion was first overtaken, but the sagacity of the brute enabled him to recognise which had wounded him, and so he escaped. When the former returned with a large party shortly thereafter, the enraged animal, which had retired into a thicket, came out and began to vent his fury on the mangled remains, when he was speedily despatched. We seem to see

him roll over beside his victim, for the eye of Coos is glistening with excitement, and reflects the scene he is describing.

What else happened that day you need not inquire, good reader, for, whilst we enjoyed our siesta during the remainder of it, we can speak only for ourselves. But here we are, some days thereafter, on the road to Oudtshoorn, an inland town about sixty miles farther on. We have reached the foot of the Outeniqualand Mountains, and are about to ascend them by the Montague Pass. Looking up, we can see some distance to the right a faint scratch on the mountain side, winding upwards, now over some stony ridge, now among high rocks, now up some gentle slope. This is the old pass, constructed, not by an engineer, with modern appliances, but by some adventuresome Boer, with a waggon and span of eighteen oxen, which were simply driven upwards in the direction which seemed most feasible, and so laid down the track for others. We are face to face with a splendid example of daring, and think of Hannibal, Constantine, and Napoleon, whose action in crossing the Alps was perhaps no braver than that of this heroic unknown, who forced the oxen amid countless dangers, for six or eight days over this mountain of 4000 feet. We watch its progress—how the long whip cracks, and the poor beasts struggle like grim death; and when all other means of spurring them on fail, the goad is applied, and threatening shouts resound, for the point is critical, and waggon and all may roll over some precipice, if the slightest stop or side movement is allowed. We could not help thinking how much the character of their country's scenery has to do with the formation of character in a people. Here the rocks have made the often phlegmatic Dutch real incarnations of will and energy, and have called forth a daring and enduring almost unsurpassed in the world's annals! Think not we are exaggerating. The very conception of such an



enterprise is grand and overpowering to us, down in the hollow here. Its realisation with a heavy waggon, of all things, is beyond utterance magnificent. Would we knew the name of the hero, whose memory no song of poet, no monument has glorified—only this serpentine track in the mountain's side remains, and for that we have to thank the rains of heaven. They have made many parts of it into the deep course of a brook.

The new Pass is a splendid triumph of human skill. It winds gradually upward along the undulating side of a ravine, which runs both high and deep into the mountain. There are some deep cuttings, huge embankments, and strong bridges. Now you are hemmed into the narrow flank of some abrupt winding, where you are alone with a patch of sky, a rippling brook, and beautiful ferns. Then you stand on the edge of some bulky ridge, which the road rounds, and the whole world seems again revealed—the forest covering a vast stretch of the mountains, the great expanse of sky, the glimpse on the plain below, the torrent roaring down through the glen. All is variety and animation, until you again sink gently back into the hollow of the ravine. So it continues at intervals, till the summit is reached, when you have a scene spread out on either hand, which is very striking to-day in its extent and placid silence. Looking back, the Indian Ocean stretches away for many a league, the coast rises here and there in precipitous line, fawned upon in this windless atmosphere by a laughing sea; the great, green plain sweeps grandly along, and the mountains look calmly down, as if chiding the flirting waves. Looking forwards, there seems an endless maze of mountains about, but no plain far below. There is a short, gradual descent, and we stand at the commencement of a long valley—at no point more than a mile or so broad—called Long Kloof. Thus we had risen to one of the steppes, of

which the interior of South Africa is formed. Each one is fronted by a line of mountains. We were driving with a dashing young Boer, named Van der Westhuizen. T. followed in a separate cart. Our companion had much to say about horses, hunting, farming, scenery, people, etc., and we found him most entertaining company, full of that life and *bonhommie*, which often characterises the younger Boers. The valley, through which we were carried, is about forty miles long, and is dotted with farms, on some of which plentiful crops of cereals and oranges are raised; on others cattle and ostriches are reared in addition. We stopped at several—admiring that of Mr. Taute very much for the enlightened views on farming, which its splendid condition revealed—and stayed a few days at the residence of Mr. ———. Here the sweet scenery, the orange trees loaded with golden fruit, the musical accomplishments of two buxom daughters, the good nature of a hospitable housewife, and the charm of “*The Midsummer Night's Dream*” and “*Romeo and Juliet*,” beguiled the hours. Of our host we saw little, for he was much engrossed with an election of members for the local Divisional Council. Feeling ran high, chiefly around his person, as he seemed to be one of those individuals who are both well loved and roundly hated. He was a man of wealth and position. The whole countryside had talked about nothing else for a fortnight. All the merits and demerits of the case were retailed to us, and, if the world were not such an impatient listener, we might repeat them. But it is just another example, so we assured them, of great events being lost to history, and they firmly believed it. Therefore mention was duly made of it in the evening devotions of our host. These were a curiosity, as the old gentleman himself was. He seemed to be one of those men, who are very difficult to make out. When you think you have them, they astonish you by some-

new phase, and leave you in wonderment. First we gathered round the supper-table. He partakes with deliberation and reflection. He is remarkably fond of lingering long over a naked bone. With the aid of fork and finger, he scrapes away, until it almost glances. That the others are waiting is of no consequence. At length a little maid is summoned, who proceeds with like staidness to clear away. For every footstep count a minute. At length! The Bible is then brought, and one of the longest chapters from the Prophets slowly read. His procedure thereafter reminded us of an old pastor, whom we once knew, who, after closing the book, first took off his spectacles, and put them carefully into their case, then looked steadily towards some object in front, perhaps the empty coffee-pot, then brought his hand slowly over his forehead, down as far as the nose, then came a sigh, and you knew to commence the operation of kneeling. We were not very devotional, and so observed our host. When about to kneel, we thought we discovered a pitiful look towards the knees of his trousers. His tone was an imitation of that solemn screech, which sometimes proceeds from the mouth of certain clerical friends, when they want you to realise how devout they are. It is more frequently a silly gloss for the original, natural devotional spirit. His prayer was long and loud. He loved the Divine presence; hence those many repetitions to prolong the hour. At its close, involuntary sighs resounded from every chair—whether of relief or repentance, needs no saying.

Another few days were spent in a deep solitude—the lovely glen called Kamnatie, which runs parallel with the Long Kloof, from which it is separated by a line of hills. Crossing this, we had a taste of what the old pass roads must have been. The one in question seemed to have become more the bed of a mountain torrent than a road.

Down we went into holes, some three feet deep, then aloft on the top of a large boulder, from which we slid down with a powerful crash, and such a shake, as to make us wonder whether the seat of our trousers were intact. This was repeated at short intervals. Oft we held our breath, thinking that we should the next second find ourselves lying among the ruins of our conveyance, with perhaps one of our legs broken, and left to meditate on the scene like Marius among the ruins of Carthage. Arrived without mishap, however—thanks to the skilful horsemanship of T.—we could enjoy both the beautiful scenery and the hospitality of our new-found friends, all the more that we had reached it after such a hairbreadth escape. Such a beautiful glen was worthy of Switzerland. Here we found almost the only miserly Boer we ever met in South Africa. We cast kindly glances towards his orange grove, but the old Harpagon would not take the hint, even when we went the length of bestowing praises upon it. We took revenge by telling him alarming stories of the small-pox, when his expression recalled the look of the Hottentot.

Our next next place of sojourn was a large farm between George Town and Oudtshoorn, belonging to Mr Van der Westhuizen. Here we revelled in a splendid orange grove; God grant, that the Australian bug may not have destroyed it! Such delicious fruit we had never before tasted, and the frequency of our presence in the grove became a standing joke. The old farmer was so hearty and generous. At first we did not hit it so well. He was argumentative, and would wager his best waggon, if the Africander farmer were not better than the Scotch. What? Could not an Africander span in eighteen oxen in ten minutes, and drive with a long whip, and avoid every stone? We don't reply; for we are too engrossed with the action to which the old man seems to suit his words. At every energetic turn of

expression he despatches some of the numerous big ants, that course over the table in every direction. They are very numerous in many farmhouses, and the common way of destroying them, is by giving them an energetic squeeze between finger and thumb. This occupation seems to be reserved for the head of the house, and as he vigorously prosecuted it the warmer he got, the reader will sympathise with us in speedily agreeing with all his conclusions, and retiring as soon as possible. We had also been attracted by the sound of music, coming from a small kraal, or circle of huts near. Here we found a mixed assembly of Kaffirs and Hottentots, enjoying a little concert of vocal and instrumental music. It was exceedingly elementary in its character. One tall Kaffir was busying himself drawing out and in an old concertina, from which a monotonous succession of sounds emanated. Dreary as it was, and containing the smallest possible percentage of harmony, it had a most exciting effect. Some were clapping their hands and smacking their lips for delight; others were making movements in imitation of the sound of the music. Now and then they broke forth into a special outburst of feeling, in the form of vigorous Kaffir huzzas. There is something primitive and original about all this animation. But when we took the instrument and treated them to a sprightly Scotch air, their wonderment was unlimited. First there reigned a great silence—that of delighted astonishment. Never did audience hang on the music of classic orchestra, as those Kaffirs gave audience to this simple performance. Their applause was afterwards expressed by a series of shoutings and jumpings, and, of course, we were encored to the echo. They say the Kaffirs are a useless, untalented set, but they love music passionately, and that is a sign that they are possessed of much soul, which, if developed, is capable of great things.

At Oudtshoorn we had an opportunity of observing life in a busy interior town. It is, to begin with, the centre of a very large farming district, and a great market for wool, ostrich feathers, and fruit. It has one fine street and one fine building—the Dutch Reformed Church, erected at a cost of £30,000. It is a neat, Gothic structure. There is much more animation here than at George Town, which represents more the old-fashioned life of the colony. Here is the stir of business and fortune seekers, and losers too. Streams of waggons are continually pouring out and in. There is a number of British settlers—merchants, mechanics, etc. But we have observed all along, that there seems little prospect for emigrants in this part of the country. Those about Knysna did not seem to be prospering very rapidly, but now we hear gold has been discovered, and it may be different. Whilst Canada and Australia are still inadequately stocked, the Cape has a poor chance. Yet it is capable of great things with its existing population, if they would only properly tap its resources.

It is “Nachtmaal” time, and many Boers and their families are here for a week’s fairing and preaching. They look honest, jovial, hardy men, and we made many acquaintances. But what made a more memorable impression than the “Nachtmaal” celebration, elsewhere described, was the picture of an old Boer schoolmaster, who had gone too deeply into the brandy bottle. He was one of those strolling tutors so much in vogue among the Boers in ancient times, and still to be stumbled on. He was a Hollander, of course. There he sat in the courtyard of the hôtel, in his rickety cart, drawn by two calm-looking stagers. These had found a convenient spot under the shade of a tree, and from that position the feeble vocal effort of their master could not move them. “Hey, Free State, hey up,” followed by a feeble move of the whip,

which, touching them like the leg of a fly, only made them whisk their tails and look more serene. Then a protracted silence, and a sinking of the head on the chest. Then a start, and again a feeble reprimand, followed by the whisking of the tails. This lasted for nearly an hour, the passers-by being apparently quite accustomed to it, until the good man's stupor abated somewhat, and then the whip told more effectively. But he had gone only about 100 yards from the hôtel, when we drove off, and God knows when he would have got home, had not hunger sent forward the poor brutes of their own accord. Alas! for the youths under this pedagogue's care. Many a funny story did we hear about the exploits of such at teaching.

Not far from Oudtshoorn is the mighty range of the Black Mountains. This is the second line we come to, proceeding into the interior. It contains magnificent points of scenery—great precipices, deep ravines, fearful caves and chasms. It shoots out here and there a number of hills, which, having a reddish colour, where the soil is not covered with grass, present a contrast to the black hues of the mountains from which they take their name. The great sight of the Oudtshoorn district are the Congo Caves in these mountains. They are filled with most fantastic stalactite forms.

We spent some time visiting among the farmers—ever most at home in the orange groves under the lovely sky,—for many of the houses were intolerably stuffy, and the country at this season looked rather parched. But the most pleasant experiences are the most fleeting, and so we had to rein up in our wanderings and return to George Town, to bid adieu to our kind host and hostess, in whose name we had received such kindness everywhere. It was getting near the end of our vacation, and the old routine of study at Stellenbosch must again be taken up. The man,

who has never had the pleasure of spending a vacation in this unconventional way, can hardly guess how full of novel enjoyment it is.

“Worth had we found in huts where poor men live,
Our daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence, that is in the starry sky,
The sleep, that is among the lonely hills.”

But trouble, too, of its own kind, had it brought. There we stand at the bottom of a steep hill, struggling with our horses, who have taken it into their head not to move an inch further—they have become “steeks,” as the Boers say. It is getting near evening, and we have far to go yet. Around us are dreary, sleepy hills, and no house for miles. This obstinate fit may last till midnight, unless active measures are taken. The Hottentot begins by swearing. T—— came as near this point as is permissible to a theological student. We try coaxing. No use. Then a protracted course of thrashing, pushing, swearing by the Hottentot—the result of which is to move about 50 yards. Then a dead halt, and the course is repeated with renewed vigour. By our united strength put forth on the wheels, we forced them on again until dead tired, when we took a rest, while T—— gave them a second dose of the whip, and the Hottentot tried the art of kicking and stone-throwing. Then we all took a rest together, and discussed the situation. Meanwhile we warned our servant against such profanity as he had been guilty of, and went at it again. It was of no use. The very devil could not frighten forward a horse in that state of contumacy. So we unyoked them and inspanned ourselves, and drew the cart in this way to the summit. So long as it was downhill our beasts went on, with a good push to start with, after which we sprang in from behind; but as soon as we reached an ascent, which was a frequent occurrence, the operation had to be performed

again. We arrived in the night at our destination, after many risks of being upset, and six hours' hard struggle. Our tongues were dry as leather with shouting, our legs and arms almost numb with fatigue.

Our homeward journey was made overland—three days by cart to Beaufort West, and thence in twenty-four hours by train to Stellenbosch. On the evening of the first day we halted in a sweet vale, where many a pretty home nestled among groves of oaks, not far from Meiring's Poort, by which we were to find a passage through the Black Mountains. The inhabitants we found to be mostly descendants of the French refugees—an industrious, sober, intelligent class. Hence the many signs of prosperity in farmhouse, field, orchard, grove, and vineyard. Our abode for the night was a nice house, belonging to Mr. Le Roux, where we enjoyed unbounded hospitality. We were up with the sun next morning, and straightway landed in the orange grove, which we did not forsake ere we had replenished the inner man, and a small sack, with the splendid fruit. This last was to furnish refreshment on the dry Karoo.

Meiring's Poort is a vast passage through the heart of the mountains. It seems to have been torn asunder in some convulsion, or more probably to have been cut out by some fearful flood. There are several such in this district. It is very narrow and twists about, in some places admitting only one cart to pass. It has an air of fearful grandeur. We feel our insignificance, eating our humble breakfast by the side of the waterfall in the heart of it, that laughs its frowns away. This interruption included, our mules took between four and five hours to get to the other side. Here stretches away for hundreds of miles the great, arid, silent Karoo. It is very lonely and monotonous. The whole day we only passed a few farmhouses. The farms are very

large, and great flocks of sheep roam over the desert, feeding on the little bushes. From the parched appearance of everything, it must rain but seldom. There was hardly any distinction between the colour of the road and the plain around,—only a little more dust. By the wayside lay many carcasses of oxen, horses, and mules, that had perished for want of food and water while drawing the transport waggon. We asked a farmer how long it was since it had rained. “The last rain,” said he, “was in February.” And this was November. No wonder things looked melancholy.

On the evening of this day we “outspanned” at a wayside hôtel. We went to bed, and tried to sleep, but the bugs would not let us; so we lit the lamp and lay on the watch till one o’clock, when we got up and continued our journey by the light of the stars. It was cold, especially before sunrise, but the scene around was so impressive, that we were almost oblivious of the fact. The great comet was flaming overhead, as mysterious in its grandeur as this deathlike stillness of the desert. After a long, weary, hot day’s travel we reached Beaufort, and thence took train to Stellenbosch.

CHAPTER XI.

OVER THE KAROO!



LOVESICK fellow-student, bent on marrying! For this purpose he has obtained the consent of all the parties concerned—Professors, parents, and partially public opinion. So he is on the point of journeying into the interior, this beautiful March morning, 1883, to bring salvation from the fretting of a prolonged engagement to his bride. He is one of those young Africanders, who get engaged when they are still in the flush of boyhood—sixteen to nineteen being the usual age of the bridegroom, fourteen of the bride. This would only have been in accordance with the custom of the land, and nothing tragic would have followed, for there is ever escape to wedlock to the young Boer, so early entangled in the net of love. But when a lad turns his thoughts to study, the case is different. He may reckon on a ten years' course before he has passed his last examination, and quite naturally the fair one's power of endurance is sorely tried. So H— could stand the letters no longer, and resolved to take that step, which is said to make or unmake one's future. On such an occasion we need something to keep up our courage, especially if we have a long, lonely journey of about 1200 miles to undertake ere the final move is taken. So our good friend asked us to accompany him, knowing that he had our sympathy in his laudable undertaking.


We had left Stellenbosch in the morning, and by sundown had reached the top of the Hex River Mountain Pass, by which the railway, which is now open from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth and Kimberly, but which then ran only as far as Beaufort West, rises to the great interior plateau, called the Karoo. It makes a considerable detour, in order to cross at this point, and thus avoid the necessity of tunnelling. While slowly labouring upwards in the dusk, we were reminded of the ascent to the Mont Cenis tunnel at Modane; only it was more winding and far longer. The "kloofs" of the mountains are filled with the richest vegetation, which takes on the garb of the high and drier Karoo-region the further we rise. Shrubs and flowers are carelessly intermingled, and seem to defy recognition in their abundance, and the eye is too much occupied with the towering heights of the Bokkeveld to the left, to scan very narrowly. These are really worthy of the Alps in everything, except in height,—some of them are about 6000 feet high. But in rugged sternness, in profusion of peak and precipice, in overpowering fastness and fantastic shape, they are quite equal. The vision wanders into deep, dark recesses, where eternal solitude reigns, relieved only by the splash of a foaming stream; then shrinks at the foot of some fearful, rocky monster, that has not a sound, not a motion, to divert attention from its omnipotent mass; then roams over a vista of strangely shaped summits, which one could metamorphose into various figures, veiled in the purple of the setting sun. There is something mysterious in a beautiful sunset, viewed from the plain. The great, blue sky seems to lower a little of the radiance of a higher world, which we are privileged to see but, like the Israelites before Sinai, not mingle in. But, on the same level here, the mystery is only increased with our nearer approach, and the soul still more lulled to contemplation.

In half-an-hour more night has wrapt everything in gloom, and we can only judge by starlight of the character of the great silent stretch around us. The stars twinkle cheerily, and we leave the earth and its monotony for their higher company. We think of those lands—Chaldea, Egypt, etc.—where they have played such a rôle, for there is much resemblance in sky and scenery between them and our present surroundings. And truly, though far off, what close connection have they had with human history! Here they have been the messengers of God: for them the ancient Hottentots used to worship, especially the moon, in whose adoration they used to spend nights in the field, chanting hymns in her praise, and performing rites in her honour. In other lands they have been the bearers of destiny, and have felt with man, speaking in their beautiful silence some great thought, which, to the imagination of the astrologer, was a great truth about future weal or woe. It was all poetry—sometimes dark and earnest, as in “Faust” or “Wallenstein”—sometimes almost lyric in its softness; and now we live in the day of science; but our wonder is only increased! The telescope is powerful, but it dazzles perhaps more than it instructs! We would require a telescope for the mind as well as for the eye. For those to whom great, mathematical calculations are incomprehensible, we might as well have back the poetical days. But it is grand to think of the splendid achievements of astronomers. We can now associate human intelligence with the sky. It declares the human as well as the Divine glory, and if they have nothing more to say of fortune or misfortune, science has.

We slept away the rest of the journey to Beaufort, where we arrived about four in the morning. One feels so dusty and sleepy, that it is no wonder one quarrels with the hotel-keeper, and tells him that South African hotels are gene-

rally the most wretched dens on the face of the earth. Are they not usually swarming with bugs and mosquitos, both of which bite most unmercifully? But they have at least one virtue—that of making you accept the inevitable, however unpleasant.

Beaufort lies, like an oasis, in the heart of the Karoo. Its environs look arid in the extreme. Its water supply is obtained from an enormous dam, which collects great quantities in the rainy season, but it looks muddy and stale, and is the cause of much fever. At this time its streets were crowded with waggons, it being still the great loophole for the Cape Town trade with the Free State and the Diamond Fields. Now, with the railway extended so far beyond it, it has lost much of its business; but it is still the centre of an enormous tract of country. A day in the boiling heat and a night in the company of mosquitos and the other members of that tribe, was sufficient to make us take an eternal flight, early next morning, by post-cart to Aberdeen Road Station, where we were to catch the train on the midland line for Port Elizabeth. We had the prospect of twenty hours on the post-cart before us. By no means a bright one, if it was to be overcrowded with mails all the way, as it was at starting. There they lay on the street, a huge pile, and after half had been stowed into the cart—a common hooded one, drawn by six horses—we were requested to get in. We do not know how this act must have appeared to the onlooker—very funny, we suspect; but to us it was a protracted squeeze between the hood and the mail-sacks, until we tumbled into a hole at the back, where head and feet were on much the same level. From this undignified position, we watched the remainder of the sacks being literally built on. A few were still bundled in upon us, under protest, for we wished to breathe freely, and to get a glimpse of the country; and then the rest were strapped on behind,



or on the roof. So we started, determined to make the best of it. Expostulation with the post people was of no use. The mails must go—you may stay. We had not gone far before our team, becoming irritated with the driver and their heavy load, took a daunder over the “veldt,” to the imminent danger of the cart and its occupants. There was a scene, of course, before they thought better of it, and proceeded. Every three hours we had a fresh relay.

The Karoo is a great plain, running between the Black Mountains on the east, and the Roggeveld, Sneuwberg, and Nieuwfeld Mountains on the west. It is about 400 miles long, extending to near the Orange River. It is thought that it was once a great inland sea, with a rich foliage round its edges and up the sides of the hills. If so, one could hardly imagine a greater contrast between the past and the present. In dry weather it is parched and monotonous in the extreme; yet even then it affords nourishment for many thousands of sheep. What they find to eat is a mystery; still we have passed flocks of sheep in time of great drought, which looked quite sleek. There are many nutritive, small shrubs, just peering above the surface, at which they nibble, and the mimosa tree, whose leaves they are very fond of, grows along the courses of the rivers—mostly dry tracks, used as roads, except in wet weather. Copious rains had fallen, a few days previous, on that part of it over which our journey to-day lay, and now, as if by magic, it had become one stretch of flower and herb. Several species of *Heliophila*, said to be extremely bright in spring; several of the *Portulacaceae*, growing on the hillsides in clusters, and affording food for cattle and sheep; the wild Calabash; numerous specimens of the *Geraniceae*: a perfect galaxy of *Pelargoniums*, *Mesembrianthemum*; several kinds of *Oxalideae*, etc., etc. Orchids are scarce. There are from eight to ten species of ferns. The abundance of thorny plants is

very remarkable, and a striking feature about the whole region is the peculiar adaptation of its vegetable life to meet the severe conditions of the dry and hot climate and soil. Succulence is displayed in the most diverse orders.

The air, which the long droughts tend to make rather irritating, was beautifully soft and sweet, although a hot sun glared overhead. Great flocks of "springboks"—perhaps 400 or 600 together—were browsing at various points along the road. The dog accompanying the postcart gave chase, but so reliant were they upon their fleetness of foot, that they merely sported with him, taking great bounds over him, and opening out their white-streaked tails like a fan straight in his face. A number passed very near us, crossing the road with one splendid bound. Here and there a wild ostrich sped away at our approach. Now a big snake, or a number of Cape partridges, or a dead or dying ox or horse by the wayside attracted the attention. But as the heat increases with the day, and the sameness of our surroundings presses rather heavily on the wearied sense, and the ever monotonous movement of our conveyance duns the ear, and our back begins to get rather sensitive to the presence of the mail-bags bound on behind, and the wishing for the end of the journey brings it no nearer, we fall into a low melancholy whistle of endless variation and length, which seems to express the spirit of the desert. Suddenly something phantom-like appears in front. We have heard of ghost appearances in such lonely spots—our friend has many sensational ones to tell—and is our scepticism to be put to shame? There in front majestically expands, in a very bare place, what seems to be a great inland lake, with soft forest around, which beckons to enjoy its shade! There is a delicious calm and seductiveness about everything, that strikingly contrasts with the rest of the scenery. We gaze at it in silence for a while, afraid lest,

by speaking, we should startle it away, be it reality or phantasy. But our curiosity must be satisfied, and so we are informed in a common-place tone, that it is "the mirage." Well it is a most wonderful delusion, but, like all delusions, it is very disappointing. You expect a delicious bath and a sweet soliloquy beneath some palm, and in ten minutes it is either gone or receded into the distance! Many travellers have thus been deluded. Lichtenstein mentions how his party, who had been months away from the sea, during a long journey in the interior, suddenly were astonished and delighted one day to find themselves close to it. But it was a sea that speedily evaporated and left the scientific traveller pondering on this strange phenomenon. It originates in the reflection of objects on the earth's surface in the air above.

At length it is sundown, and the night will hide that apparently endless line of dusty road, and enable us to transform our surroundings into fairyland. But our dreams were rather roughly disturbed by sundry accidents. Once or twice we left the track and had to puzzle about on the "veldt," at the risk of being upset, then we managed to run smash into another cart, but the damage was, fortunately for us, on the other side, then we had a scrimmage with a number of German Jews, who at a certain place invaded our overladen conveyance, then we found ourselves immersed in an argument on the origin of languages, and at length, about sunrise, crawled into the train that was to take us to Port Elizabeth. This railway runs inland as far as Graaf Reynet, an important centre of trade, and cattle and ostrich farming. The nearer the coast, the more beautiful the landscape. Green hills and thick forests take the place of the desert. The contrast between yesterday and to-day, in all respects — conveyance, scenery, course of events—is very decided.

Port Elizabeth is the Liverpool of South Africa. It is the first town of the Eastern Province. There is a marked difference between it and the towns of the Western Province. It is the difference between the Dutch-Africander and the English ideas of life. One can always judge the character of a people from the condition of its towns. There are everywhere signs of enterprise and more advanced civilisation here, that is, if a more lively and refined mode of life may be reckoned an advancement upon the more patriarchal type. Thus, for instance, there are wide streets, great warehouses and shops, a splendid townhall and library, a huge covered-in market, some beautiful churches, a charming villa quarter on the Hill, and a fine botanical garden. Landwards, in its immediate surroundings there is nothing to attract the eye, but British energy has done much in trying to embellish them by gardens and parks. The view seawards is splendid. From the Hill the whole stretch of Algoa Bay, lively with discharging steamers,—for there is no harbour,—lies before you. It is almost always ruffled, and often lashed into big billows by the south-easter, and ever sparkles with diamonds under the brilliant sun.

Port Elizabeth being a railway depôt, there is a great traffic with the interior. Previously this was carried on by means of transport-waggons, but they are now greatly superseded. Vast quantities of wool and ostrich feathers are shipped for Britain, and in return all kinds of merchandise are sent up to the Free State and Griqualand West.

Our next halting place, after passing for a whole day through a green and partially wooded country, was Cradock, the terminus of the railway at that time. Hence its importance as a trading place. But its inhabitants, at least the Dutch portion, have found time, amid the toils of money-making, to devote attention to architecture. There

is here the most splendid Dutch Church in all South Africa. It is a lofty, massive building in Grecian style, and it has the advantage of occupying a commanding position, at the head of the town. It is built of granite, and the Corinthian pillars in front are chaste and pleasing in form. They support a fine spire. We have seen very few churches in Scotland to be compared with it. It cost £30,000. The amiable old minister, Mr. Du Plessis, gave us a most kindly welcome. He took as his text a verse from the Acts of the Apostles, to the effect that when Paul saw the brethren, he thanked God and took courage. We had, therefore, to submit to the necessity of being discoursed on, and we hope it may be the last time that the materials of a sermon are derived from our humble person. It was much ado about nothing, but the good people enjoyed it. To them the most common events have a religious meaning. After the good pastor's oration, we could have commanded unlimited obedience. There is, after all, an unsuspected element of popery in our religion, however simple, and ready to canonise sometimes with slight provocation.

At Middelburg, a day's journey further, we came upon large groups of Kaffirs, working on the railway. They belonged to many different tribes, were of various colours—from the red Kaffir to the one of deepest black,—and looked a rollicking, noisy crowd of big children. They worked very animatedly, in wide contrast to the two Rossinantes who are yoked to our cart here. It was a two-wheeler, if wheels they could be named, for they were anything but circular. The springs were of that easily compressible type, of which you become most conscious when you sit down with all the energy of youth, and not in the gradual manner of old age. This reacts upon the seat, which cracks very ominously. But you get accustomed to it, for everything cracks about you, and we momentarily expect it to dissolve.

We explained its not doing so from the gentle way in which our animals drew it. They took to walking at the slightest provocation. So did we, for it got so shaken, that it would only bear a carpet bag, and so we entered the town like two travelling Jews. We drew up at the parsonage, expecting to have all the dogs and bairns of the place at our heels, which was partially the case. The worthy pastor understood the matter, however, and showed that he realised our dignity, notwithstanding our sorry position. On resuming our journey to Colesberg we found some transport riders in still a worse plight. Their waggons had stuck fast in the deep mud, the result of the previous heavy rains. They were busy digging them out, and had already made deep ditches without success. The afflictions of travellers and transport riders in South Africa are truly many.

Colesberg is situated in a ravine, not far from the Orange River. We have passed again into the Dutch quarter, though there is such a fuss of business, that we hardly observe it. But immediately we strike off the great high-road inland, and take a less frequented path along the Orange River, we are amid the passive, easy-going Boers. The usual staidness of farm life is here observeable in a very pronounced form, from the extra solitude of the surroundings, which seems to have a pacifying and sometimes petrifying effect on character. We are often what our company is, and nature is here so passive. In earlier times, they tell us, the life of the Boers in a district like this was insufferably dull. The master would ride round to visit his flocks, sleep, smoke, drink a dram, and hunt a little. The mistress would sit the whole day, with her feet on a pan filled with live coals in cold weather, scolding her servants and drinking coffee, which stood in a pot perpetually beside her. The houses were poor hovels, built of clay, with one or two compartments, the only furniture

being a waggon chest, which served for a table, and a few chairs. Now, however, splendid farm houses peep at us from all sides. This district is called the Hantam, and is famed for its fine ostrich and sheep farms. The way winds along not far from the river. It is a noble sight, reminding somewhat of the Rhine at certain points—perhaps more in regard to the woody hills on either side, than the river itself. It is almost as large, and seems to reach the sea over a series of rapids. It rises high among the mountains of Basutoland and the Transvaal. Therefore, looking from the hill here, it presents a picture of calm dignity and fretting impatience at intervals. Ruigtefontein, the residence of our friend's bride and our destination, reposes on an eminence at the head of a sweet vale, overlooking the majestic river.

Standing on the "stoep" of the farmhouse, we first observe our immediate surroundings. Here, are circular enclosures for the sheep, oxen, horses and ostriches, called "kraals." There, a stable and a few huts for Hottentots. This formed the steading, for here the open air is more the dwelling-house of man and beast alike than in the northern hemisphere. The hills on either side of the valley are covered with flocks of sheep and goats, and a glimpse of the mighty current of the river can be caught between the lines of tall willows and mimosas, that shade its banks. There is a calmness and freshness of expression about the whole scene, that makes it most delightful. It lulls to reverie, broken by the arrival of the Kaffir shepherds with their flocks. There might be 5,000 or 6,000. The horses, ostriches, and cattle are left out in the field all night.

In the family, life is bright and free. Evening is the time for assembling together, for the father and sons may have been away over the farm the whole day. The cheerful supper ended, and devotions performed, neighbours and

relatives gather in, this evening, in large numbers, to greet the happy bridegroom. He is put through his catechism by the old "Tantjes;" while we were taken in hand by the "Ooms." We have to tell them volumes about the "Bovenland," as they call the district in the vicinity of the Cape. Among both sexes we noticed some who were peculiarly dressed—the women in plainest black, with a black mutch; the men in black corduroy suits, with the trousers cut in Italian style, and short jackets. Some of them had a portion of the hair combed down over the forehead. The expression of their faces was somewhat sanctimonious. It turned out that they were of the sect of the "Doppers," who discard organs and hymns in worship, and all modern advances in doctrine. One in particular drew attention from the clerical cut of his garments, and the deference shown him by the others. This was "Oom van Donder," the Dopper "Predikant" of Ventersdorp. Oom had been a farmer at one time; but when that godly saint, Dominus Postma, came out from Holland to preach a crusade against organs and hymns, and anything short of absolute predestination, he gave Oom a little drilling in the art of describing the perdition that awaited all organ grinders, hymn makers, and men of modern ideas, and so he became Predikant. Still he is too genial to be the sour specimen of humanity that the Dopper minister usually is. He has many a lion story to tell, and many a joke to throw at the young couple, whom he is soon to unite. He is king of the situation, as he sits and smokes his pipe, and with loud voice and in homely phrase addresses whomsoever he listeth. He is one of those who know how to enjoy their own eloquence. That the curse of the Almighty rests upon the Kaffirs, that it is a point of supreme importance to the Deity that He be praised in the most drawling, discordant manner possible, that the correctness of one's belief on such

matters earns special divine approbation—all this he is ready to swear to. It seems never to have occurred to him that religion is a matter in which there should be as little dogmatism as possible. We know so little of the Almighty that an enquiring, kindly spirit is the most religious one we can cherish. By it we show our sense of the vastness of God, and unconsciously give expression to an adoration which may be far more acceptable than a long rant of words, rich in sound, but poor in meaning.

On a farm where horse, cattle, and ostrich farming is extensively carried on, in addition to the rearing of sheep, there is much to do and much to see. But we had come, not to study farming, but to spend a pleasant holiday. Here is a chance, then, of enjoying invigorating exercise and excitement, when it is proposed this morning to bring all the cattle, horses, and ostriches to their respective "kraals," in order to be counted. They are scattered miles away over the whole farm; so this is done occasionally to prevent any being lost or stolen. We proceed on horseback, some dozen, including servants. It is early—four o'clock; but such work must be done before the great heat of the day makes exposure in the open dangerous, or at least very tiresome. Some have guns, slung over the shoulder, and, as we canter along the river side, advantage is taken of a favourable opportunity to shoot a few fish. This is the usual mode of fishing here—certainly a very extraordinary one. It is wonderful with what precision they are killed by marksmen expert at this kind of shooting. Depth below the water, as well as distance, has to be reckoned. We observed a large number of leguans swimming about, and as we could not hit any of the trout, we took a few shots at one of them, which, from size and length, formed an easy mark. One charge at length took effect, and, on dragging it out, we found that it resembled a crocodile. It looked

very hideous, but is considered harmless. It only goes the length of stealing a lamb occasionally.

On the banks of the river there is a beautiful creeper called "the traveller's joy," which fastens like ivy on the trees. We made wreaths of it to ornament our horses' necks, and then sped on. The hills are charmingly decked with blackwood and olive trees, and at this point came down so close to the river that our way soon became barred, and we had to clamber up the steep sides; in order to reach the higher plateau behind, where we expected to find the cattle. The path was so rough, that we had to dismount and leave the horses. On the face of a rock, shaded by an overhanging olive, we found some rough drawings done with red clay, resembling the figures of certain animals. These were old sketches of the bushmen, to whom this country at one time belonged. They are to be found frequently in sequestered spots, and are often cleverly executed. Lichtenstein mentions having discovered the picture of the unicorn amongst a number of representations of other animals. At the top, a deer was surprised at his early morning meal, and a few shots sent after him, but in vain. We then spread out in a long line, and tried gradually to form a semi-circle round the cattle, driving them towards one point. At this they became somewhat excited, and suspecting evil intentions on our part, set off at full gallop over the "veldt." We followed in pursuit, straight away in the midst of much dust and noise, but our chargers enjoyed the fun and kept up, and sometimes even charged in amongst the hindmost oxen. In this helter-skelter fashion we tore on for some miles, until pursued and pursuers had thought better of it, at which we were much relieved, for a ride like this on a fleet African horse had greatly disturbed our equanimity. When at last they were got together, and in a more composed mood, it was easy driving them, and so we left them

in the charge of two or three Hottentots and went in search of the ostriches. They were far more difficult to manage. They are so fleet, and so easily startled, that it took us hours before we got them to go in the direction wanted. When you think they are going all right, one or two suddenly break loose, dart through the line of drivers, and, with the speed of the wind, seek the four quarters of the horizon. You must just follow on, and struggle away till you have got them on the track again. The bird earns on such occasions many a curse on its provoking stupidity and obstinacy—the chief traits of its character. But then it may remember the rough ceremony of plucking, which it may have to go through when caught. This is done by pulling a long stocking over the eyes, and down the neck, and then cutting, or drawing out the best feathers of all sizes and several colours. The white feathers are the most handsome, some of them being a yard long, and very gracefully curved.

Another time it was a deer-hunt on horseback. We were a large company, including some fair damsels of the country side. The square in front of the house reminded a little of the courtyard of an English mansion in the olden time. Horses, saddled and bridled, were held by the Hottentot grooms. There was a great display of stamping, neighing, and other signs of impatience. The dogs were all excitement, which increased to wild outbursts of joy when we made our appearance, a gay troop of young men and maidens, and prepared to mount. This was in some cases no easy matter, as many of the horses were fiery, and inclined to resist the attempt to get on their backs. We had spoken to an old Hottentot beforehand, and he took care to get us a pretty tame beast. But their idea of tameness is rather relative—if he does not rear and bolt without considerable provocation, he is wonderful. Well, we cannot reason the

matter in such public surroundings, so we get on with an air of great hardihood and ease. First it is walking pace, and then canter, and, as they get excited, full gallop. It is then that the subjectivity of old Klaas' idea of tameness begins to manifest itself rather disagreeably. As the gallop gets more violent, our quadruped shows inclination to be the foremost in the fun, and bolts forward with the head well down and the tail as far up. Our feet slip rather far into the stirrup, and our motions do not always keep time with his. Hence a good shake now and then, accompanied by an inclination to lose balance. We give Providence the reins, and hope for the best. But he is not vicious—Klaas had studied his nature—and is soon satisfied with his performance. He slackens pace, and the others ride up. We expect to be chaffed, but are looked upon as something of a hero, which we take as a matter of course, thankful that we had no fair partner to superintend, so that it could not be observed that we had been run away with. At this point some of the servants were sent out to manœuvre, so as to bring the deer—a large flock of “springboks”—to pass a certain point. There a volley would be fired into them, and chase given. This happened as had been arranged. On they came, fine noble animals, with mingled fear and haughtiness in their eye, when bang go twenty guns, and half-a-dozen roll over, whilst several others plunge away with broken leg or rib. Then to horse, and away we scamper like the wind, in twos and threes, right in amongst them and round them, some firing the while, some manœuvring, so as to shape their course in a certain direction. But, needless to tell, they speedily outstrip us, and escape over a little ridge in front. They are terribly frightened, and do not draw limb till some half-score of miles intervene between them and us. Our other chances for the day depend on our again surprising them, or in falling in with

another herd, when the same action is taken. We were not very fortunate, only one or two stray little bands coming within fire. So we turned our attention to other kinds of game, such as the crane, the bustard, etc., and succeeded in bringing down a large vulture. Here and there we came upon a tortoise, and in its neighbourhood some hedgehogs, for the two, we are told, are very friendly.

The return home in the evening air was a complete contrast to the start—jaded man and beast—the former ready for the feast, which the goodwife had heaped upon a groaning table. But not too lame for the dance, for the young folks here seemed more sensible in their merry-making than those in the neighbourhood from which we had come. Even the young Doppers were touched by the sprightly music, and yielded to the sweet sentiment of humanity.

The day preceding the wedding found the long, bridal procession on its way to Ventersdorp. It was headed by a spring waggon, drawn by eight prancing horses. In the midst was an American spider, in which sat the bride and bridegroom, whom it was our privilege to accompany. What we talked about, how we swept grandly along amid clouds of dust, how we felt the pain of being in the same carriage with a bride and bridegroom for three or four hours, we leave the reader to imagine. The chief event of the drive was the meeting with a host of friends from the Free State. Among them was an old patriarch and his wife, to whom we were introduced as the parents of our friend. There was much emotion and heartiness displayed, and the scene under the open sky was quite oriental.

It was a great occasion for the little village of Ventersdorp as the procession swept within its gates. It is a typical interior village. To-day it looks from the distance as if it were tired of its existence, so dusty, sleepy, and wan

does it appear. But our arrival gives it some animation, which must be grateful to the few people in it who miss the pleasures of life sadly here,—the minister, the doctor, and a few other individuals of cultivated mind, who must put their hands to anything in a colony. So it gets more jovial. Troops of young people pay homage to the bride and bridegroom, who have to make and listen to a number of jokes for the occasion. The old folks form a circle by themselves, wherein they discuss the question of the day. Amongst the “Tantjes” there are just a little envy and jealousy apparent, for this is considered a splendid match. For a young Boer girl to catch a “predikant” is a great feat, and the “predikant” being among the Boers the greatest man of the district, her fortune is made. She is henceforth a member of the highest aristocracy. Are we mistaken,—misled by that vanity which characterises our sex? Perhaps; but it does look suspicious that the amiable old “tantje” there has so often occasion to send her pretty Lintje with the cake basket and a cup of coffee! But there is at least a chance, and in this isolated spot chances are rare. Too late, Madam.

“Oom van Donder” evidently desired to be powerful, as he read the service from the pulpit of the small Dutch kirk on the morrow. His voice quivered in its solemnity, and the great silence gave scope to the roughest bass we have ever listened to. He rose in his exhortation so high on the wings of the sublime, that it quite surprised us to hear him resume his everyday humorous tone in a lively after-dinner speech, and, as he portrayed the pleasures and responsibilities of wedded life, we began to realise that the object of our journey had been accomplished.

CHAPTER XII.


THROUGH MANY LANDS!



It is a lovely August day, 1883. The *Asiatic* is steaming leisurely along the fair shore of Pondoland. The Indian Ocean is like the cloudless sky—one vast sheet of soft, light-blue; like it, too, in striking contrast to what it had been under the furious blast of the north-west wind a day or two previously. We had had a lively time of it rounding the Cape, and coasting along as far as Port Elizabeth. The air was burdened with huge, sombre clouds, which, driven onwards by the wild wind, enveloped us in sharp hail showers, whilst passing. The waters were lashed into huge rollers—the incarnation of fury in movement. Down in the trough there it looked every moment as if we should be engulfed in the fearful abyss; but the good little steamer breasted the great mass bravely, and brought us safely out of the storm into the calm. Such it had become by the time we reached East London, a busy seaport, situated in the bent of a usually stormy bay, which is, therefore, but ill-suited to be a harbour. Notwithstanding this, there were many large vessels at anchor, loading or discharging cargo. Passengers, landing or embarking here, generally get a rough handling from Neptune. They usually arrive at the steamer wet to the skin, and owing to the lurching of both vessels, have to submit to be hoisted up in a basket. Inside the bar of sand, that here chokes the mouth of the river, as in the case of all South African

rivers, there is a roomy basin, which will afford fine anchorage, should the harbour authorities ever succeed in clearing away the impediment to entrance.

East London is the outlet for the export trade in wool and feathers, carried on through Queenstown and King William's Town, which, with fair Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, form the chief cities of the Eastern Province. The scenery around is flat and bare, but it must have improved as we went on during the night, for this morning, as we have already said, the eye falls upon the green hills and glades of Pondoland. We are now opposite the mouth of the St. John's River—about one and a-half miles from the shore—where a few years ago a small white settlement was made. Nature here unites sweetness with grandeur. The river, a broad, deep stream, winds through a mountainous, thickly-wooded country, and enters the sea at a point, where it has forced its way through a high, rocky hill. In front rise huge fragments of rock, against which the swift current foams. On either side frown fearful precipices, which throw deep shadows on the troubled abyss below. Beyond these the water becomes still and dreamy, and laps the forest-covered hills, that dip abruptly down into it. With the exception of a fort, erected and garrisoned by a portion of the Cape Mounted Infantry, habitation there was none but that of solitude. In the neighbourhood we could discern a number of Pondo kraals, on the green hillsides, and, with the aid of the telescope, also the tall, strong figures of their inhabitants. The more we see of the country, the more are we charmed. It seems one labyrinth of forest, ravine, hill, and meadow—one, in which to lose oneself, must afford something of the charm of fairyland, if it were not perhaps dangerous, owing to the disturbed state of feeling among the Pondos at present. It is always a drawback in viewing such scenes,—mild and fresh in their beauty—that we must asso-



ciate them with savagery. How different, if we could think of them as the sympathetic witnesses of a civilisation, like them in its character. There is a certain poetic attractiveness about the picture of the noble savage, reclining under the palm. Still, if we think of his crude intelligence, his low habits, his rude science of life, we experience a want in not being able to see the beautiful spirit of man, capable of enjoying nature and using her resources. If we could think that there, in that sweet spot, nestled some peasant's house, however humble, in which the higher joys of home, the virtues of civilised life were present, it would be like sailing along the most beautiful part of the coast of Italy, with the presence of intelligent and active man, to lend true charm and significance to nature! But now? She seems lonely, silent, and inappreciated. Would that the day had come, when the black man will impress us with his character as powerfully as his surroundings, and then our enjoyment of these will be unmarred.

After Pondoland, the coast of Natal seems at first rather tame. But high mountains loom in the distance, and as we approach the Bluff, the hill which stands sentinel over Durban, it becomes densely wooded. The city has most magnificent streets, and gardens, villas, and public buildings, which would grace any renowned European watering-place. The new Town Hall is an especially costly and commanding building. The great warehouses, that line the streets, tell of an extensive, general trade with the interior of the colony. An enormous number of bales of wool is sent down in return and shipped for Britain. We observe crowds of Blacks and Indian Coolies, and above some of the largest shops, we read Arab names. The streets were animated by a stream of traffic, and enlivened by the light colours of the Coolie dress. The villa quarter is on the Beréa Hills, which form a splendid background, and there one may see

two things, seldom surpassed,—the grand prospect on the town, the lake-like harbour, and the wide ocean, and many pretty girls, for which charm Durban is famed.

One is much struck by the tropical aspect of its surroundings. The banana, the date palm, the cocoanut, the pine-apple, the sugar-cane, the coffee-plant, grow luxuriantly. Forests, of tropical richness, adorn the hills. At Isipingo, in the neighbourhood, the manufacture of sugar is largely carried on. The mills are driven by steam, and thus Southern nature has been wedded to Northern civilisation. Of this we see further signs in the beautiful city,—the post, the telegraph, the railway. By the last-named we travel to Maritzburg, at the imminent risk of our life, for it is a miserably-constructed one. But the route is very picturesque, notably at Botha's Hill, which affords a magnificent view backwards over rolling hill and forest, to the sea, and away to the left, through a maze of wooded ravines, to the Zulu border. From here the stations and farms become more numerous, and you soon see signs of the vicinity of an important city. Suddenly you come in sight of the capital, lying in a beautiful hollow, and showing quite an imposing number of spires and chimney-stalks. It has very little to show, however, in support of its high rank. There is Government House, the residence of Sir Henry Bulwer, since replaced by Sir ——— Havelock, a garrison, with some dragoons and a regiment of Highlanders in it, the Legislative Hall and Government buildings,—a huge block in a shady square,—plenty of representatives of rank and fashion, as these go in such a place, two Cathedrals, belonging to rival Episcopalian camps, a nice park, etc. Still it is more like a provincial town than a capital,—plain in the extreme,—with much of the old Dutch ease of its Boer founders of forty years ago still perceptible. Durban, as far as outward aspect goes, has a far better title to the distinction of capital

than Maritzburg, and much has been spoken about removing the seat of Government thither. The large warehouses, the stream of ox-waggon, the bustle of clerks and salesmen, show in what direction the energies of its inhabitants are at work. From several points within, you catch charming glimpses of the encircling hills, forests, and dales, crowned in the distance by the massive Table Mountain; for almost in every corner of South Africa you light upon one of these peculiarly-shaped heights. But whilst its surroundings delight the eye, they interfere very much with the circulation of the air, and they enhance the soporific effect of the great heat so much, that Maritzburg has been nicknamed "The Sleepy Hollow." This sluggishness of the atmosphere finds its equal in the moral condition of some of the citizens, which, if all tales be true, is not very vigorous. The number of scandals, compared with its size, is quite shocking.

In the evening we strolled into the Legislative Council Chamber, and found the members divided into two parties, for it is true all the world over, that men will wrangle about politics and religion. The question to-night is, whether self-government is preferable to remaining in the subordinate position of a crown colony. The greater number of the speakers incline to answer in the negative, which for a young country, with a small white population in the midst of a large coloured one, seems the only prudent conclusion to come to. On one side are the restless Pondos; on another are the envious Boers, who claim it as theirs, by right of first conquest; on another the Zulus, numerous, though beaten; on the other the sea, and how it could maintain its youthful existence without a mother's help to shield it from all these bad boys, is not easy to see. But, like all youths, it is fond of talking big. For all that it loves its protectress with passionate warmth, the colonists being more English

and Scotch than Irish or Dutch, and the chief longing of the young Natalian is to pay her an affectionate visit at the earliest opportunity.

From Maritzburg we took the postcart to Newcastle, a little town situated in the north-west corner of the colony. The railway had not then been extended to Ladysmith, 100 miles further into the interior, as is the case now. Of course our conveyance was crammed with a very mixed company, representing the heterogeneous elements which compose the population of such an infant country. There was an army captain and a roadside canteen-keeper, who seemed to compete with each other in smoking and swearing. Back to back with them sat a Wesleyan preacher and a young Boer, the former evidently with as grieved a spirit as his poor back was tired, for it is no joke for a minister to have a swearing captain to support. A couple of gold diggers, fresh from California, were absorbed in the discussion of past experience, and in making plans for future prospecting at "De Kaap." They were eagerly listened to by a towsy, tattered individual, whose features proclaimed him a Jew—to-day the humble possessor of a few trumpery ornaments, to fleece the Boers with; next year probably to be met in the streets of Durban, a wealthy, well-dressed merchant. The others seemed solid men of business, on their way to consult their agents up country.

It is the end of the winter season; hence the snow on the Drakensbergen, looming up towards the Western horizon. Their towering mass, dominated by peaks of about 10,000 feet high, reminds one of the Bernese Oberland, and the glorious sunrise, which transformed even the swearing captain into a reverent adorer of nature, served to make the likeness more pronounced. One can imagine how refreshing such a scene was after the tropical heat of the previous days. A wonderful combination of the torrid and

arctic zones! The plains looked dry and bleak, for, in the absence of rain, the grass is withered under the winter sun. Great fires were raging everywhere, leaving the "veldt" black and horrid, for it is held by many to be necessary to burn the old grass for the sake of the young growth. At night the effect is very grand. Plain and hill are all ablaze, so that you may imagine the legions of Vulcan hurrying to and fro over a doomed land.

The whole country seems to be one vast meadow. It has been called the garden of South Africa, and as far as beauty of scenery and fertility of soil go, it merits the compliment. But it is an uncultivated garden, for the eye may wander for scores of miles in many parts, and only see a few maize and corn fields in the neighbourhood of a farm or kraal. This has resulted from the action of the Government in alienating the soil in former years. Huge portions were granted to settlers and Kaffirs. Then several companies were formed, who bought up the most of it, so that now the Government only possesses a small portion, mostly in out-of-the-way places. The owners of the rest prefer to let it as sheep and cattle runs. Hence agriculture, and with it, in the absence of industrial resources, immigration are very much repressed. Only along the coast, where coffee, sugar, ginger, pepper are produced, have the capabilities of the soil been drawn out. The trade with the interior is the chief occupation, and this gave occasion, before the railway was so far extended, for transport-riding on a large scale. It is a pity that Natal must depend far too much upon the Transvaal and Free State, whilst the treasures of its own soil are left untouched. With the advantages of a delightful climate, and the great reservoir of the Drakensbergen, whence countless streams seek their way to the sea, it would, doubtless, become one of the richest agricultural countries on the face of the earth. But

in a colony the chief question always is, how to make money most quickly, come of the future what will.

It is a lonely land. During our three days' journey from Maritzburg to Newcastle, we only pass through a few roadside hamlets, which are both small and unfinished looking. How different such a journey through one of the old civilized lands of the North: Hardly an inch of uncultivated arable land! Proud old castles and venerable cathedrals! Vast cities and smiling villages! All the wonders of modern invention! The refinements of civilisation! The mighty traces of history and romance! The imagery of art and poetry! Here? The Kaffir kraal, the rough farmhouse, the miserable scratch of a road,—with scores of lumbering ox-waggons,—newly erected bridges over the rivers, the untouched soil, the presence of nude man! The number of inhabitants, how small in proportion to that of square miles! Larger than Scotland, it has not a twelfth of its population, and how large a portion of it does the savage element compose. Besides 10,000 Indian Coolies, there are only 30,000 Europeans, who live amongst and govern 350,000 Zulus. These found Natal so safe and delightful an abode after British Government had asserted itself, that they flocked to it from all quarters. They were granted permission to reside and live as they chose—work or sleep, if they behaved themselves. Their presence in such numbers is an eyesore to the white who would have them kept under stricter laws,—forced to work at their bidding—and many are the broils between them and the farmer and merchant. We think that it would have a better effect on themselves, if their laziness and idleness were in some way curtailed. The men, who are polygamists, often loll at their kraals the whole year round, and make the women do all the work,—make beer from the mealie, cultivate a patch of ground, and look after a few cattle and

sheep. The hundreds of thousands of acres, wasted in this way in Kaffir locations, might surely, by stricter legislation, be put to better use.

Newcastle is situated in an angle, formed by the Free State and the Transvaal boundaries, while Zululand and Basutoland are in the vicinity. A very varied life therefore surges through its streets—Zulu, Basuto, Boer, and Natalian—if streets they can be called, for Newcastle is one of those places, where you can study the primitive origin of cities. The houses are mostly shanties—built some of them in a straight line—but when you take a general survey, you can hardly discover any harmony of arrangement. In this respect you seem to see an art of architecture of primitive times, whilst, strangely, everything else is modern. In a budding country you frequently meet such examples of the past and present combined. All the same, it is the world *in parvo*!—a macrocosm in a microcosm. Only everybody is more independent in mien than at home, for the doctrine of equality obtains unconsciously in a colony. The new civilisations have little of the mediæval spirit in them. Otherwise, people work and rest, gossip and read their newspaper, discuss and wrangle, love and hate us all the earth over. It is difficult at first for one, accustomed to a wider and more intellectual range of society, to contract into the little groove of the place, but you soon discover some individuals of educated tastes. That douce, old Scotch merchant has brought thither and retained a canny, well-informed mind. That bronzed, roughly dressed salesman is a scion of some English noble family,—a not rarely met individual in South Africa. Another, with perhaps more conceit than learning, has caused it to be whispered about, that he is a B.A. of an English university. Another has dramatic genius of a high order, of which he delighted to give proof on the stage of the little, local theatre. But

the sun in Newcastle's social firmament is the editor of the *Echo*, who combines high culture with great courtesy of manner.

For us nature, in her lonely grandeur and vastness, has a most fascinating charm. In such an isolated spot one is more observant of, and impressed by her. How the peace of a calm, moonlight evening soothes the soul, whilst the inimitable brightness, in which everything jubilates on the morrow, makes you, out of sympathy, joyful. Then again, you are oblivious to all but an indefinable silence, wrapping everything in melancholy—the precursor of the thunder storm. In the morning, not a cloud, but a fearful heat, which makes the atmosphere to vibrate nervously. Towards noon a little speck hanging over yon peak in the far distance! It expands, blackens, moves nearer, and the silence is broken by a low, sullen boom. In half an hour the sky all round is hung in the darkest drapery; but it expresses violent wrath, rather than the gloom of sadness. They make an awful picture of passion, those frowning clouds, whirled by the tearing wind and belching forth fire amid the crash, as of a thousand cannon. Soon the dust cloud hides all else from view, and the roar of the hurricane hardly admits of hearing the dull thud of the striking lightning and the continuous discharge of the thunder. Nothing mortal can stand before its rage, as it approaches like a million furies, seeking whom they may devour. With a noise like to rend the universe, it rushes past; the rain pours in torrents for a quarter of an hour, then the sun bursts through, and, amid its laughing rays, there is peace again in sky and on earth. Sometimes it is not accompanied by the dust, but resembles a northern storm on a highly magnified scale. The lightning, being then distinctly seen, is most appalling—streams of fire at different points—zigzag or perpendicular, according to the state of

the air—entering the earth with a terrible report, and throwing up a great quantity of debris. The peals of thunder are most violently loud, shaking houses to their base, and striking awe into the heart of man and beast. To be caught by the storm, while riding in some lonely place, as we have been, is eerie, eerie beyond compare. But there is nothing for it but to dismount and hold your quivering horse, with the saddle on your head, to give protection from the hail. To gallop on, in the hope of escape, is highly dangerous, for a horse heated and moving violently is the best possible target for the lightning stroke. At Newcastle, and throughout Natal, the Free State, and the Transvaal, such storms are of daily occurrence in the hot season. They afford grim enjoyment to a spirit revelling in the unfettered display of nature's action.


The general representation of the great world, crowded on the stage of this small sphere, would not have been complete without the presence, in some degree, of the ecclesiastical divisions, so rife at home. One moderately sized church would have held the whole of the population, but, as elsewhere in the case of religion, the shades of opinion were limitless. There were Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, etc., and they must needs remain within the exclusive bounds of their respective beliefs, especially the first named, haughty in the vaunted superiority of the so-called Apostolic Succession. It is melancholy that nobody seems to claim to be a Christian. We minister to the handful of Presbyterians, who have called us to be their bishop. If a man were little-minded enough to believe in the exclusively divine right of Presbytery or Episcopacy, how the limitedness of such a situation would nurture it. We should not then be surprised if we found him, with the gravest, most important air, addressing the canine part of his congregation, for we were often

amused to observe that the audience consisted of as many dogs as persons. Towards the end of the service they manifested their joy at the prospect of relief by loud barking, which often spoiled the benediction.

Our diocese is about one hundred miles long, and half as many broad; many a lonely ride we therefore undertake for the purpose of holding services at farms and hamlets. Our only luggage is a saddle-bag, containing a supply of provisions for one day, and some other small necessaries. Some good Christian may give us a bed, if not, we shall take the grassy "veldt."

Here is a Kaffir kraal—the whole district swarms with them. Their owners seem to have some taste, for they invariably select a sweet hillside spot. The huts are constructed in the bee-hive fashion, and arranged in the form of a circle, with that of the head man, which is always larger than the others, in the centre. One kraal may belong to one man, if he is rich, and has consequently many wives. You often observe, therefore, a number of women and quite a multitude of children hanging about.


The look of these habitations takes us back to an early grade of civilisation—the first stage above the cave residence; and if the people and their surroundings did not look so dirty, we should feel inclined to praise their free, untutored existence, as compared with that in many of the horrid streets of our manufacturing towns, for instance. There is at least fresh air, a bright sky, and undisfigured nature. Such treatment seems to agree well with the human constitution. The women have handsome figures, natural grace in their motions, and often a certain soft beauty of countenance. They are almost martial in their gait. But they are the drudges of the men, and do not lend that refinement and moral inspiration to society, which Emerson holds to be two of the chief marks of an advanced



civilisation. The other sex are remarkably powerful-looking—tall, straight, round-chested. They are often to be seen nearly nude, but, when possible, are very fond of wearing an English soldier's cast-off uniform. It may be tattered almost beyond recognition, but their pride is immense, as they swagger about with the air of a general. If they were not so lamentably addicted to drinking, quarrelling, fighting, and lolling lazily about, when not engaged in working for a wife, we should have some hope of their being, notwithstanding their black skins, one of the finest races on earth some day. There is a mighty bound between this and that, however. Still here is something which, as it speedily changed the aspect of the northern nations, so, if its power has scope, must speedily regenerate them. It is a mission station, belonging to the Berlin Missionary Society. Mr. Princesky is the missionary. He has gathered several hundreds of Natal Zulus around him, who, in contrast to the savage, live in houses, cultivate a piece of ground, and wear European clothing. By teaching the young and preaching Christianity, as well as by inducing them to adopt industrial habits, the missionary seeks to elevate them. The discipline is strict. Firmness is kindness in such a case. Mr. Princesky informed us, that when two of the women quarrelled violently, the punishment he prescribed was that they should be shut up in a large sack together till the kiss of peace was implanted on each other's lips! We found him most excellent company—the man of science as well as the missionary—and therefore much unlike some others of his calling, whom we have met throughout South Africa. He is a most acute observer and enthusiastic admirer of nature, and had a vast fund of information on physical subjects. He is something of a gold hunter, and told us to keep a sharp eye on all the brook courses we happened to pass. He has discovered a

cure for snake bite, which he had proved to be effectual in the case of forty of his Kaffirs, who had been bitten by poisonous snakes. He takes the head, the gall, and the liver of the dead snake, burns them to a cinder, and makes a powder. This he rubs on the wound, and also gives some to the bitten man to swallow, and a cure follows. He had experimented on a young goat, which he allowed a very poisonous snake to bite. In a second or two it fell down, but he applied the powder and saved it. We suspect that this is after all only a recast of some of the Kaffir remedies, which the witch doctors are very expert at composing. But, remembering how frequently death follows the bite by one of the deadlier kind, we were rather sceptical. The only preventive we should care to rely on is, where possible, a handkerchief bound tightly above the part bitten, and then suck out the poison or cut out the flesh, with a good bumper of brandy to finish. Snakes swarm in this part—the puffader, the boomslang, the cobra, etc. We were advised by an old Boer always to keep a look-out when taking a walk, and one day, unmindful of this kindly advice, we almost put our foot on one of the first mentioned. Another time, when following the plough with a friend, we were startled to find a big one, which had just been turned up, wriggling among our feet.

Our parish, as afore remarked, lay in a setting bordering several countries. On the one hand Zululand, quite near. Ascending some hill, such as Majuba, now famed in the annals of the world, we could see far into it. It is a beautiful, though melancholy prospect, for the green hills, wooded knolls and ravines, and grassy plains, which have such a pleasing effect on the eye, are associated with so much dissension and carnage. Near yon hill, for instance, is the spot where the Prince Imperial was slain, and close to it Zlobane, where thousands of Zulus were mowed down



civilisation. The other sex are remarkably powerful-looking—tall, straight, round-chested. They are often to be seen nearly nude, but, when possible, are very fond of wearing an English soldier's cast-off uniform. It may be tattered almost beyond recognition, but their pride is immense, as they swagger about with the air of a general. If they were not so lamentably addicted to drinking, quarrelling, fighting, and lolling lazily about, when not engaged in working for a wife, we should have some hope of their being, notwithstanding their black skins, one of the finest races on earth some day. There is a mighty bound between this and that, however. Still here is something which, as it speedily changed the aspect of the northern nations, so, if its power has scope, must speedily regenerate them. It is a mission station, belonging to the Berlin Missionary Society. Mr. Princesky is the missionary. He has gathered several hundreds of Natal Zulus around him, who, in contrast to the savage, live in houses, cultivate a piece of ground, and wear European clothing. By teaching the young and preaching Christianity, as well as by inducing them to adopt industrial habits, the missionary seeks to elevate them. The discipline is strict. Firmness is kindness in such a case. Mr. Princesky informed us, that when two of the women quarrelled violently, the punishment he prescribed was that they should be shut up in a large sack together till the kiss of peace was implanted on each other's lips! We found him most excellent company—the man of science as well as the missionary—and therefore much unlike some others of his calling, whom we have met throughout South Africa. He is a most acute observer and enthusiastic admirer of nature, and had a vast fund of information on physical subjects. He is something of a gold hunter, and told us to keep a sharp eye on all the brook courses we happened to pass. He has discovered a

cure for snake bite, which he had proved to be effectual in the case of forty of his Kaffirs, who had been bitten by poisonous snakes. He takes the head, the gall, and the liver of the dead snake, burns them to a cinder, and makes a powder. This he rubs on the wound, and also gives some to the bitten man to swallow, and a cure follows. He had experimented on a young goat, which he allowed a very poisonous snake to bite. In a second or two it fell down, but he applied the powder and saved it. We suspect that this is after all only a recast of some of the Kaffir remedies, which the witch doctors are very expert at composing. But, remembering how frequently death follows the bite by one of the deadlier kind, we were rather sceptical. The only preventive we should care to rely on is, where possible, a handkerchief bound tightly above the part bitten, and then suck out the poison or cut out the flesh, with a good bumper of brandy to finish. Snakes swarm in this part—the puffader, the boomslang, the cobra, etc. We were advised by an old Boer always to keep a look-out when taking a walk, and one day, unmindful of this kindly advice, we almost put our foot on one of the first mentioned. Another time, when following the plough with a friend, we were startled to find a big one, which had just been turned up, wriggling among our feet.

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whilst attacking the British position. In the same direction is the Blood River, where the Boers long ago took revenge for the massacre of a number of their relatives by the savages. Further off to the East are the scenes of many conflicts—Rorke's Drift and Isandhlwana—the former reminding of great victory, the latter of bloody defeat. And now it is torn by contending factions, and all this fighting apparently in vain. Truly our Government, of whatever party, may bury its head with shame on beholding the results of such blundering and vacillation. It is a humbling example of that something wrong in our ways of ruling our Empire, which has often of late years wrought so much disaster. Continuously firm policy and no hesitation about annexation, where such action alone will help, is the only remedy.

On the other hand, but at a considerable distance, Basutoland—the Switzerland of South Africa, for the Alp-like range of the Drakensbergen sweeps through it. It was long held by the powerful old chief, Moshesh, against all enemies, both white and black ; but complications having arisen, it has since been annexed to the British Empire. There are still occasional squabbles among the petty chiefs, who, under the magistrate of their district, are allowed to exercise a certain authority. Under the British rule, however, and the influence of missions, the people are learning to value order and industry. They are a fine race, but brandy, imported from the Free State and the Colony, is doing much mischief. But for this, they must speedily become a wealthy agricultural and pastoral people.

Between these two extremes lie the Free State and Transvaal, both reached in an hour or two from Newcastle. A journey through the first-named is both healthful and pleasurable. It is a high plateau, from 4000 to 5000 feet above

the sea level. The great plains are picturesquely broken by hills; the scenery, notwithstanding, is usually too monotonous to charm the eye, accustomed to the green undulating landscapes of Natal. Much of it is dry and barren, and in winter, owing to its height, is swept by cold winds, and sometimes heavily covered with snow. Yet it furnishes pasture for millions of sheep and cattle. Its inhabitants are thus exclusively a pastoral people. They have neither water supply, nor till lately did they have means of communication, to enable them to devote themselves to agriculture. Many are very rich in land and herds, but their wealth is at the mercy of wind and sun, for the long droughts often carry off thousands of their stock. They live in homes, sometimes handsome and comfortable, though the old clay hovel is still frequently to be met with. There they delight to practise a boundless hospitality, dispensed in quite a fashionable style, for education has lately made rapid strides, and has brought refinement of manner along with it. There is still a considerable Dopper or backward element. These refuse to move with the times. They stick to the ox-waggon, and scorn the railway, which in Natal and the Colony has superseded this patriarchal mode of conveyance. They harbour in the serener nooks. The towns and villages, on the other hand, are full of sprightly life, especially Bloemfontein, the capital, in whose sweet shade all the bustle and show of high life flourish. Perhaps its proximity to the Diamond Fields accounts for this. One would hardly imagine the existence, some hours to the West, in the midst of what was a lonely waste twenty years ago, of a mighty city of 40,000 inhabitants, revelling, often rioting, in luxury and wealth. Kimberley, the South African London, is the chief outlet for the commerce of the Free State, and so, greatly influences its life. To its neigh-

bourhood it owes much of its prosperity ; to the able government of President Brand, its peaceful relations to the Basutos and other coloured tribes on its frontiers.

The Transvaal is a vast country—green and well-watered, and thus admirably fitted for agriculture and sheep-farming. It has great stores of coal, like Natal, and much gold, if report be true. Fruits and cereals grow luxuriantly, notwithstanding the great altitude. It has a most salubrious climate ; yet it is a crippled land, for it is the Elysium of the obstinate Boer, who does his best to suppress all enterprise that does not breathe a fervent Africander spirit. With its splendid chances, it has more than once been on the brink of bankruptcy. Under English rule, the telegraph was introduced, roads extended, and commerce encouraged. But the Boer loves isolation, and freedom from taxes and obtrusive law, and the Englishman is often insolent, and given to ridicule. So the two did not assort, and fought together ; and the Boer, who is brave and intelligent, though narrow-minded, won, as we shall see. Now the land is again the Paradise of Boerdom, and languishes somewhat. Its chief towns are Pretoria, the capital, Potchefstroom, and Leydenburg. In these there is still a considerable English element, for the Boer of the Transvaal is no merchant—a simple problem of multiplication would utterly crush his ingenuity. But his land has a future—its fertility, its advanced position, its scope for many happy homes, must make it, under enlightened government, great and prosperous.

CHAPTER XIII.

OUR BATTLES WITH THE BOERS.



FROM a little hill in the environs of Newcastle, the summit of Majuba is clearly seen. With many traces of the recent Transvaal War still fresh, in and around the town—encampments, sentry-posts, graveyards—we were naturally curious to see the actual scenes of the battles—namely, Ingogo, Lang's Nek, and Majuba, about twenty miles distant. Accompanied by an Africander friend, we accordingly set off one day on horseback, with this object in view. Our companion, being an enthusiastic patriot, burst forth occasionally in a hearty panegyric on the heroic deeds of his countrymen, and, though apparently at our expense, we found it so natural, that we enjoyed rather than resented it. For, on such occasions, it is better to realise yourself not as a part of a part, but as a part of the whole of humanity. Indeed, we were glad of the opportunity to crucify a little that feeling of nationality, which is the parent of so much silly exclusion and jealousy on the face of the earth. It has its place in the constitution, but when it comes the length of making the distinction between Greek and Barbarian, as the nations in their pride tacitly do, however plausibly they speak, it is time to rein up. But our glowing comrade now seems to have worked himself beyond the range of reasonable admiration, and is thundering against the English in bitter, pharisaic spirit. Remonstrance avails not, so nature herself inter-

feres. Just at the height of his oration, his horse stumbles into a deep hole, and goes straight down, bearing his eloquent rider very unceremoniously back to the reality of our mother earth, and the necessity for soft treading when you have a horse for your platform.

We called on several of the Boers, two of whom kindly undertook to be our guides over the battlefields. They were of the real Transvaal type. Although slow and phlegmatic, there were not wanting signs of decision and intelligence. Cross them, or give them cause to believe that they have been wronged, and they could be as violent and obstinate as any recalcitrant donkey. This trait alone may give rise to dogged courage—hence the bravery displayed by them in the late war. They have ever been prone to use their “roers,” when their designs were thwarted. The English and they have squabbled together for half a century, but except at the battle of Boomplaats in 1849, it never came to more than an occasional skirmish. But the war, waged in this north-west corner of Natal, was a prolonged and desperate struggle. Its cause was the annexation of the Transvaal by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the representative of the British Government, in 1878. In the proclamation, issued on that occasion, the reasons adduced to support such action were, that the Transvaal Government had failed to rule successfully the large native population within and around its borders; that thus the native chiefs had acquired a confidence and sense of superiority dangerous, not only to the white inhabitants of the Transvaal, but to the whole white race throughout South Africa; that commerce was well-nigh destroyed; that the country was in a state of bankruptcy; that the white inhabitants were divided into factions; and that a large number of the people had petitioned for annexation.

This was doubtless a high-handed proceeding. Sir Theo-

philus did not act in accordance with the instructions contained in his commission, which directed annexation only under certain conditions—viz., at the wish of the people, and after approval by the Governor of the Cape Colony; whereas the Special Commissioner simply stepped in, and by a vigorous stroke proclaimed the country British territory. Still, although the manner of carrying it out cannot be justified in point of form, it is certain that annexation was inevitable, and in the interest both of the Transvaal and the British; but as much in that of the former as that of the latter. There has been much controversy on the point, but it has not been conclusively shown that the condition of the Transvaal was much different from what it is described to be in the proclamation. Sir Theophilus has found a staunch defender in Mr. Trollope; a bitter opponent in Mr. Aylward. But it is certain that the position of affairs was as bad as it could possibly have been, and could not have been allowed, from prudential reasons alone, to continue so any longer.

So far, so good. But mistakes were made—such as the appointment of unsuitable officers to the public posts; the Boers were irritated, and two deputations—the second bearing a petition signed by 6500 burghers—were sent to England, to entreat that their land should be restored. Sir Owen Lanyon then took the place of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, an appointment which, coupled with the failure of the deputation, served to increase the dissatisfaction. Then came the advent of Sir Bartle Frere, who had a conference with 4000 Boers near Pretoria. While not holding out any hope of the annexation being recalled, he admitted that they had many grievances, and showed himself both straightforward and sympathetic. He advised them to send another memorial, to be transmitted, not by a deputation, but by himself, accompanied by a sketch of a constitution, which,

in his opinion, should be granted, and would be accepted. The next arrival was that of Sir Garnet Wolesley, who came to subdue Secoecoeni, and settle the Transvaal. In the first object he quickly succeeded; in the second he showed as much of the blundering spirit as he had manifested in the settlement of Zululand. None of his measures brought contentment, nor had those of Sir Owen Lanyon, after his departure, any better effect. Taxes were not paid, and the British authority openly defied. At length it was resolved, at a great mass meeting, held at Paarde Kraal, on the 13th December 1880, to restore the South African Republic, by force of arms, if necessary, and a triumvirate, consisting of Messrs Krüger, Joubert, and Pretorius, was appointed to organise and carry on a government. These issued a proclamation declaring the *fait accompli*. Sir Owen Lanyon issued a counter one, declaring the Boers in arms rebels, and ordering the military to take action for the suppression of the rebellion.

Thereafter came the news of the Bronkhorst Spruit fight, between the Boers and a portion of the 94th regiment, which was on its way from Leydenburg to Pretoria, in order to reinforce the garrison. The force was composed of over 250 men, with Colonel Anstruther in command, and left Leydenburg on the 5th December. While on the march, rumours reached them that the Boers had risen in rebellion, but no hostile signs were apparent till the 20th, when the regiment had arrived at a point about thirty-eight miles from Pretoria. About mid-day the Colonel and Conductor Egerton were riding some distance ahead to select a camping ground, when a number of Boers were perceived on a low ridge to the left. The Colonel galloped back and ordered the men to halt, and the rear wagons and men to close up. Meanwhile a messenger, with a flag of truce, approached till within one hundred yards. He then halted, calling out

thrice in English and thrice in Dutch, that if there were anybody to speak with him, he should come forward. Conductor Egerton advanced, and was informed that he had a letter for the Colonel and desired to see him. On being informed of this request, the Colonel, accompanied by two officers, walked out to meet him, when a sealed letter was handed to him. Its purport was, that the Republic having been proclaimed at Heidelberg, and the Dutch people being determined to maintain it, any movements of British troops were prejudicial to their interests, and if the Colonel advanced beyond the Spruit, they would consider it a declaration of war, and he must be responsible for the consequences. The messenger added verbally, "My General gives you five minutes' time to consider over the matter, and what your plan will be." Colonel Anstruther replied, "I've got my orders for Pretoria, and to Pretoria I'll go." Each party then galloped back to his own force, and firing commenced. The Boers had at first been about three hundred yards distant, but it is said that whilst the flag of truce was flying, they advanced till within two hundred, and the soldiers had not time properly to open out in skirmishing order, when a murderous fire was poured upon them. It was returned, but the enemy having the advantage of a rough, slightly wooded height, and being posted, as is their custom, behind trees and stones, were hardly touched by the British fire. The officers, with but one exception, were all either killed or wounded during the first ten minutes. For ten minutes more the firing was kept up on both sides, but at the end of that time, Colonel Anstruther, seeing that there was no possibility of victory, and in order to save the small number of men still unstruck, told them to throw up hats and wave handkerchiefs as a sign of surrender. In the meantime fighting was going on all along the line of waggons, half a mile in length, up to the rear guard.

About 200 Boers, after firing a volley at 400 yards' distance, dashed up to the waggons, shooting the oxen and many of the men in charge. Immediately after the flag of truce was hoisted, Commandant Joubert came forward and shook hands with the Colonel, saying he was sorry to see him wounded. He then ordered the remainder of the men to surrender their arms, and all the baggage, and to proceed to their camp some distance off. To the wounded, amongst whom, sad to say, was a woman, the wife of one of the sergeants, the Boers were most attentive. Every day they brought milk, butter, eggs, bread, fruit, etc., and if a man went to any of their farms, they at once, without payment, gave him anything he wanted. On the British side, 7 officers and 149 men were killed or wounded, and of the Boers 2 killed and 5 wounded—a grim commentary on British shooting power, although it must not be forgotten that the poor fellows were taken at disadvantage; a high compliment to Boer tactics.

The excitement which the news of this disaster caused throughout England and South Africa was greatly intensified by the murder of Captain Elliot, when crossing the Vaal. He and Captain Lambert had been released on parole, and had been brought to the bank of the river by a Boer escort. What then happened has been vividly described by the latter. "Being pitch dark, with vivid lightning, the river roaring past, and as I knew impassable, I asked, had we not better wait till morning, as I did not know the drift. They replied, 'No, cross at once.' I drove my horses into the river, when they immediately fell; lifted them, and drove on about 5 or 6 yards, when we fell into a hole; got them out with much difficulty, and advanced another yard, when we got stuck against a rock. The current was now so strong, and the drift deep, my cart was turned over on its side, and water rushed over the seat. I called out to the

Commander on the bank that we were stuck, and to send assistance, or might we return, to which he replied, 'If you do, we will shoot you.' I then tried, but failed, to get the horses to move. Turning to Captain Elliot, I said, we must swim for it, and asked, could he swim? to which he replied, 'A little.' 'If you can't, I will stick to you, for I can.' When we were holding this conversation, a volley from the bank was fired into us, the bullets passing through the back of my cart, one of which must have mortally wounded poor Elliot, who only uttered the single word 'Oh!' and fell headlong into the river. I immediately sprang in after him, but was swept down the river under the current some yards. On gaining the surface of the water, I could see nothing of Elliot, but called out his name twice, but received no reply. Immediately another volley was fired at me, making the water hiss where the bullets struck. I now struck out for the opposite bank, which I reached with difficulty in about ten minutes; but as it was deep, black mud, on landing I stuck fast, but eventually reached the top of the bank, and ran for about 2000 yards under a heavy fire the whole time. The night being pitch dark, but lit up every minute by vivid flashes of lightning, showed the enemy my whereabouts. I found myself now in the Free State, but where, I could not tell, but knew my direction was south, which, though it was raining, hailing, and blowing hard and bitterly cold, an occasional glimpse of the stars showed me I was going right. I walked all that night and next day till ten o'clock, when eventually I crawled into a store, kept by an Englishman, Mr. Groom, who did all in his power to help me. I had tasted no food since the previous morning at sunrise, and all the Dutch farmers refused me water, so without hat or coat, which I had left on the banks of the Vaal, and shoes worn through, I arrived exhausted at the above gentleman's place."

The British Government now took serious measures to assert its authority. Large reinforcements were sent out, and in the meantime Sir G. P. Colley took up a position with two regiments, the 58th and the 3-60th, at Mount Prospect, whence, on the morning of the 28th January 1881, he moved forward to attack the Boer position on Lang's Nek, the key to the Transvaal on the Natal side. This Nek is a slight hollow on a semicircular range of hills, over which the road into the Transvaal passes. On the left is Majuba, a hill towering high above the others; on the right the ridge is broken by stony "koppies" at intervals. Arrived at the foot of this range, the general thus disposed his troops. The 58th regiment was directed to storm the height, a little to the right of the road, the artillery to protect its ascent, by throwing shells on to the summit, the small number of cavalry to charge on the right of the 58th, whilst the 60th was kept in reserve. The repeated attempts of the cavalry to dislodge the Boer detachment on the "koppie," against whom their efforts were directed, failed, and they were forced to retreat with many empty saddles. Meanwhile the infantry, under cover of the artillery fire, were steadily ascending, to attack the main Boer position. Already well advanced, they were subjected to a heavy fire from the enemy above, and likewise to a galling cross fire from the party of Boers who had repulsed the charge of the cavalry. Colonel Deane then gave the word to charge, which the soldiers, notwithstanding the exhaustion resulting from their long climb through tall, wet grass, responded to with great vigour. The Boers answered with volley upon volley, which took fearful effect, killing Colonel Deane, who fell 10 yards in front of the first man, and either killing or wounding all the other officers and scores of the men. Nevertheless, the soldiers kept sturdily advancing, one man getting so near the summit as to bayonet a Boer; but the


Boers being largely reinforced, it became impossible to stand many minutes before this deadly fire. So the retreat was sounded, and the 58th retired down the hill in good order, but suffering severely from the shower of bullets sent after them. The General then moved back to the camp at Mount Prospect, having lost seven officers and nearly two hundred men killed and wounded. The loss of the Boers was fourteen killed and twenty-seven wounded.

Many reasons have been put forward to account for the disastrous repulse. The fact remains, that it failed simply because the British troops suffered a defeat. There was no lack of courage. They fought till they were frightfully cut up. But General Colley apparently underrated his enemy, and had too few troops to storm such a strong position. It is melancholy to stand here among these many graves and think of this, and to remember that the whole struggle was for the British a miserable squabble, which could have been avoided, had we ruled the Transvaal with some portion of wisdom since the date of annexation.

The Boers now attempted to prevent the General's communicating with Newcastle, so that by the 7th of February the mail-cart was intercepted between the town and the camp. On the morning of the 8th, therefore, he marched out with five companies of the 60th Rifles under Colonel Ashburnham, to patrol the road, and meet and escort some waggons expected. The force had safely passed the Ingogo River, about five miles from the camp, but here signs of the enemy's presence were perceived, and the videttes were driven in. Thereupon the General directed his troops to occupy the rough plateau between the Ingogo and Imbazane valleys, and here the fighting took place. It was more a large shooting match than a pitched battle. The Boers, crouching behind stones and bushes, sent destructive volleys as often as opportunity offered, which wrought great havoc

among the artillerymen, as they were most exposed. The firing on both sides, at intervals thus very heavy, was kept up from twelve to six o'clock in the evening, when a terrific thunderstorm coming on, the Boers retired, intending to return in the morning. The British had maintained their ground; but seeing that the position was a dangerous one for such a small force to hold, it was decided to withdraw to the camp during the night, which closed in most threateningly—with dark clouds, heavy showers, and occasional lightning, the moon now and then bursting through in hurried gleams. The wounded were collected and protected as well as possible by waterproof sheets, blankets, greatcoats, etc., until the ambulance could be sent out. Their condition on the exposed field in such a night was beyond description pitiable. The force then silently moved off, in a hollow square, the guns in the centre, and the infantry in skirmishing order on the four sides. On reaching the river, they found it much swollen,—deep and rapid, as in the case of all South African rivers in time of flood, and it was with great difficulty that they were able to cross. Some of the first men were swept down, but saved by a projecting sand-bank. The rest went over in detachments, holding hands. One brave officer, Lieutenant Wilkinson, who had greatly distinguished himself in the engagement, was unfortunately drowned on returning some hours later to the camp, after having brought assistance to the wounded. It was intensely dark and thundering wildly, and this arduous march, after the fatigues of a hard day's fighting, must be looked upon as no slight feat, especially as the wearied soldiers had to drag the guns up the hill on the other side of the river, the horses being unable to pull them up the steep and slippery road. The camp was reached at 4 A.M. Eight officers and over 130 men had been left dead or wounded on the battlefield. The Boers had eight killed and ten wounded.


General Colley was now completely surrounded in his camp, but on the arrival of General Wood at Newcastle with some additional regiments, the Boers retired to their old positions. More reinforcements were despatched from England, with Sir F. Roberts as commander-in-chief. Pending the arrival of these, it was resolved by the two generals on the field to take united action; but it was deemed prudent that General Wood should first bring up all the available forces from Maritzburg. However, while still absent, General Colley moved out of camp on Saturday evening, 26th February, on a secret expedition, taking with him some companies of the 58th, 3-60th, and 92nd regiments, the Naval-Brigade, two guns, and some hussars. Their destination was kept secret till the moment of starting, when it was announced that the force was to climb the Majuba mountain, which commanded the Boer lager. Each man was supplied with three days' rations and seventy rounds of ammunition. On the side facing the British camp the mountain is rough and steep; on that on which the Boer encampment was, it is more gradual and less covered with bushes. It was up the former side that the expeditionary force clambered. On the way two companies of the 60th, and one of the 92nd, were left at different points, with no idea of the plan of march. Guided by Kaffirs, the rest toiled up, having frequently to crawl on hands and knees over boulders and down through deep "dongas." Most fatiguing it must have been, judging from the look of the gradient from the road, which appears at points perfectly impassable. It was only after six hours hard climbing, and just at daybreak, that the summit was reached. The men then took breakfast, and dug wells for water, but no attempt was made at fortifications as no attack was expected, and all were mortally exhausted. Great was the consternation in the Boer camp on perceiv-



ing the soldiers on the top of the mountain. Thinking that they had cannon with them, they hastily removed a waggon-laager out of range. It was then decided to storm the British position, and a strong mounted force left for this purpose. Dismounting at the foot and extending in skirmishing order, they began to ascend in three parties, from the north, east, and west. A larger body remained below to cover their ascent, and kept firing at the soldiers, who showed themselves on the crest of the hill. When these hostile movements of the enemy were perceived, a number of stones were hastily collected round the north front of the mountain, for the fire of the Boers stationed below, to cover the advance of the storming parties, was very accurate. It seems that the firing, which commenced about 5 A.M., was of a desultory character until towards noon. It then began to dawn on General Colley that the Boers were determined to take his position by a rush, for by this time the enemy had advanced near the summit, having got up almost unseen on the right and left flank by means of "dongas" and rough bush-covered ground. Previous to this, hopeful telegrams had been transmitted to camp, but then the volleys from the storming Boers became very heavy, and the soldiers were shot away from position after position, until the remainder, finding themselves completely outgeneralled, and resistance hopeless, took to flight. A charge with the bayonet had first been attempted by a portion of the little band of defenders, but so furious was the fire of the Boers, that only three or four got within thrusting distance. Wild disorder now followed. The soldiers leaped headlong down precipices 40 feet high, over huge rocks, and into yawning clefts, many of them falling victims to the deadly hail of balls, showered on them by the victorious Boers. The General had fallen, being first wounded and then shot through the head within four

paces, whilst still encouraging his men. Honour to his memory as a brave commander, respected alike by friend and foe.

The Boers now advanced to dislodge the two companies left at the base. These had entrenched themselves and kept up a vigorous defence for a time. But receiving no assistance from the camp, and finding themselves greatly outnumbered, they were forced to retire, saving all the spare ammunition. Altogether this most disastrous and most disgraceful repulse had cost the British 4 officers killed, 8 wounded, 7 prisoners, 86 men killed, 125 wounded, 51 prisoners, and 2 missing, whereas the Boers only lost one man killed and a few wounded. This result one can hardly view as history; it sounds a little like the fable of Constantine putting, with only twelve horsemen, 150,000 men to flight at the battle of Hadrianople. It is incomprehensible how a handful of Boers could have stormed and taken a steep, high mountain from a band, however small, of disciplined troops. What they fired at the whole long morning is a mystery,—perhaps at their own imaginations, like the dog, who attacked his own shadow. Let us see what the Boer General Joubert says about it: “I was sitting writing copies of President Brand’s letters, and also a letter to Colonel Herbert Stuart. At 4 o’clock I woke every man up to his position, and I commenced a report to General Cronje. I was still sitting writing, and the sun had just risen, when it was reported to me, that the troops were coming up the right-hand hill. Then it was ‘To saddle, to saddle;’ but, to our astonishment, we saw that the enemy had entire possession of the hill. Apparently, one would have thought, that everything was lost to us, and so it actually would have been, if they had retained possession of the hill; but, beyond all our expectation, the Lord assisted us, and we all ascribe it to the most wonderful



deliverance and help of an Allgoverning and Almighty God. Our men climbed the mountain with a courage and energy beyond description. The troops, under the personal command of General Colley, would not surrender the position. They fought like true heroes, but our God gave us the victory and protected us, and we excelled gloriously in acts of courage and tact. The most wonderful thing to me is that, on our side, only one was killed, one severely wounded, and four slightly. I conclude with wishing Your Honour joy at the successful issue of to-day's battle, and that this day may be considered for the future a day of thanksgiving and prayer."

Some days previous to this most disastrous encounter, Sir George Colley had replied to a note from Krüger, in which the latter asked, whether some arrangement could not be entered into, by which peace could be secured, to the effect that, if the Boers discontinued armed resistance, her Majesty's Government was prepared to appoint a commission with extensive powers. This was written on the 21st February; and accompanied with the promise, that, if the proposal was accepted within forty-eight hours, he was empowered to cease hostilities. Unfortunately, President Krüger's answer did not arrive within the prescribed time; otherwise there would have been no Majuba fight to chronicle. General Wood took up the thread of the peace negotiations which were now earnestly carried on by both parties at several meetings, between the British Commander and his staff on the one side, and General Joubert and the representatives of the Boers on the other. These meetings were sometimes of a very stormy character, but through the skill of General Wood, whose conduct in carrying out his arduous task received high commendation, and with the invaluable assistance of President Brand of the Free State, the negotiations in favour of a peaceful settlement pro-

gressed, until, on the 23rd of March, a convention was signed, by which both parties agreed to terms of peace. The principle of these were, that the Queen should be Suzerain over the Transvaal, with a British resident at the capital, that the country should have entire self-government, as regards its internal affairs, that it should not take action against us with an outside power, without permission of the Suzerain, that amnesty should be granted to all in arms against the British, from the leaders downwards, and that a Royal Commission should be appointed to settle details. Next morning the Boer encampment on Lang's Nek broke up, after the men had been paraded in presence of General Wood, and addressed by their leaders, by whom the terms of peace were explained. One can imagine the intoxication of joy, with which these warriors, having overcome the British forces four times in open fight, took their way to their homes.

The besieged garrisons in the Transvaal were now relieved. They had endured, amid much suffering, a siege of three months duration, and had performed, especially at Potchefstroom and Standerton, many brave feats.

The Royal commissioners appointed to settle Transvaal affairs met near Newcastle about the middle of May, but shortly afterwards resolved to adjourn to Pretoria, where the sittings were continued till the beginning of August. Their intercourse with the Boers was not always of a smooth character. The loyalists and natives did not fail to press their interests forward, and it was exceedingly difficult to make a settlement suited to all. The Boer leaders and they at length came to terms, and on the 3rd August the triumvirate, Messrs. Pretorius, Joubert, and Krüger, signed the Convention, which was ratified on the 25th October by the Volksraad. It granted complete self-government, subject to her Majesty's suzerainty, and made

stipulations regarding a British resident, compensation claims, native protection, the State debt, etc. The troops then departed. The loyalists and natives were extremely dissatisfied. The latter expressed themselves to the following effect: "England is a strong country, and gives back the Transvaal to the Boers, because it belongs to them. Natives say, it is not the Boers' but theirs, their forefathers having found and occupied the land long before the Boers came. They will not acknowledge the Boer government, and if necessary will fight."

To one standing on these now silent battle-fields,—on each of which a monument has been erected, telling how the many officers and men interred beneath nobly died for Queen and country,—and sadly looking down on this October morning on the beauty of early summer, there is matter enough for meditation. Disgust that there should have been such a squabble in which our good name had one more stain attached to it (for, how the descendants of the Boers will hereafter fight their father's struggles over again, and tell how the hated invader was disgraced!), is the foremost feeling. Then the heart melts in sympathy for the men who died for no reason whatever, than that they had to be the sacrifices of the miserable tactics of politics, and the mistakes of their leader. Certainly in such a scene there is nothing of the romance of war; but its awfulness and unnaturalness. As to our enemy, it is only noble to be generous, and if their agitation and subsequent rebellion were not entirely the result of enlightened views, still they must have been actuated by most stern principles before they could have gone so far and done so much. A violent party there was, which would have perpetrated outrage of a barbarous kind, and there were many cases of coercion to fight. In so far, the movement was contemptible, and would have been but a riot, had not cooler and abler heads taken

the lead, and the movement become more a national one. We think they made a great mistake in not submitting to British rule; it is the sure forerunner of prosperity and humanity. But there certainly was room for men, with their prejudices, and what they considered past wrongs, to think otherwise. They have at all events increased their reputation by their behaviour in this strife. One, who can not be credited with Boer proclivities, thus writes of them: "The behaviour of the Boers has won them the respect of many, who formerly held them in contempt. Hardly an officer is there, who had anything to do with our late enemies, but is favourably impressed with them. Their kind treatment of the wounded, their pluck, their civility on all occasions when meetings have taken place, have done much to remove bad impressions."

Of the British Government, it is perhaps an act of charity to be silent. There can be no doubt, that the policy of federation, which led to annexation, was a wise one, and the only one that can bring lasting benefit to South Africa, under whatever form it may be wrought out. Instead of a number of petty States, the law of nature and expediency seems to be, that the white man should have one central government, so that, united and secure himself, he may better influence the coloured millions with whom he comes into contact, thus preventing wars, and the consequent irritation and stagnation, that follow. But there is no describing what people will do for the sake of party and theory. For these the Boers risked extermination by British arms; for these we have a great orator, denouncing the act of annexation as unjust and oppressive. And what was the result of the great orator's attempts? To set up the Boers against his political opponents, and then, when their confidence in himself was exhausted, to bring down upon his head showers of blows instead of words, and afterwards to throw on his

Cabinet the odium of defeat, withdrawal, and utter failure. If you wish to hear a dead man's curse on mere party tactics, go to Lang's Nek ; and if you would hear one ironical laugh amid the deafening applause, that greeted those passages in the great orator's Midlothian speeches in 1879, in which the Government was condemned, and men were led to look for perfect rectification and success, all the world over, if only another Government held the reins, then betake yourself to Majuba on a still evening. Oh, the vanity of human speech ! Alas, the Nemesis of hard facts !

CHAPTER XIV.

SLAVERY AND SERFDOM.



SLAVERY at the Cape began shortly after the advent of the white man. According to the Dutch law, the Aborigines of a colony could not be enslaved. "It is not," said the Dutch East India Company, "our object to enslave the natives, but to elevate and improve them." Therefore the full freedom of the Hottentots was at first respected. But the colonists were too lazy to work, while slaves could be had from some quarter, and so a few hundred were brought from Angola and Guinea. Their numbers were afterwards increased from these and other quarters of Africa, also through the transportation of Malay criminals from the East Indian Dutch settlements.

These were as much at the mercy of the master as those belonging to any West Indian planter. Whether their treatment was kindly, depended entirely on his character. A man of mild disposition would naturally deal mildly with his bondsman; one of fierce, boorish manners, harshly. And since the South African Boer is of very irascible temperament, we should not have given much for the chances of being very gently dealt with, should we have been so completely in his power, and happened from some cause, trifling or otherwise, to excite his irritation. We should have been sure of a good round of the "sambok," which would have been the mildest form of punishment. It is melancholy to think of it. The fact that the horrors of a West Indian

plantation were happily for the most part unknown—how could such be perpetrated in a land very largely pastoral?—is a redeeming feature. But the very idea of slavery in any form is repulsive. The enjoyment of freedom must ever naturally go hand-in-hand with the possession of will. It may be wise to subject beings of a lower grade of civilisation, to somewhat stricter treatment, than accords with the freer spirit of an advanced people. But to give one human being the keeping of the natural rights of another—to give him the power of buying, selling, flogging, starving, torturing his fellow—is contrary to the first sentiment of justice. Take it even in a modified form, such as we shall grant that it was at the Cape. Its every association is hateful to us. What immorality, sloth, inhumanity, could it not easily provoke! No pains were taken to instruct the slaves in the Christian faith, because, according to Dutch law, baptism was equal to manumission. What even, if they were better fed, and perhaps happier, than thousands in our large towns—their life in many cases more like that of their class in patriarchal times? Does not slavery in any form lower the dignity of man in the dust? Do not marvel, then, if the murder of the masters by their slaves was a frequent occurrence. Nature will take revenge—at length assert herself in an overpowering demand for her due.

Occasionally, for instance, some fearful tragedy attended the importation of a fresh cargo. A Dutch East Indiaman had sailed from the Cape to Madagascar to purchase slaves. The captain hit upon a plan to obtain them for nothing. He enticed a large number of natives, with their chief, on board, and then, overpowering them, put them in irons, and sailed away. Towards the end of the voyage, he was foolhardy enough to release all his prisoners at once for an airing on deck, instead of adhering to the usual custom of freeing two or three at a time. Probably he relied on the

strength of his crew to overcome the captives. But he was dearly mistaken. The latter rose and murdered all except himself, the mate, and a few men to work the ship. They then directed the course to be changed to the eastwards, the quarter from which they knew they had come. But the course steered by day was altered by night, so that the vessel by-and-by came in sight of Cape Agulhas, which the mate informed them was part of their own country. He managed to persuade them that the vessel required some repairs, so that no objection was made when the anchors were dropped. Bottles containing an account of their situation were then dropped overboard, and were fortunately picked up by the people on shore. The whole Dutch population of the neighbourhood was roused. A fire was lighted to let this be known on board, and then the ship was run on shore. The savages, seeing no Europeans, and believing that they were arrived at their own country, swam through the surf, when they were suddenly received by a volley from the hidden Dutch commando, and either killed, drowned, or captured. The tragedy was completed by the suicide of the captain, who feared lest he should be called to account for his conduct in releasing his prisoners, contrary to regulation.

And how fared it with the Aborigines of the Cape—the Hottentots and Bushmen—on whose territory the Dutch had gradually been encroaching? When the Dutch began to colonise the Cape, the Hottentots were scattered in many different tribes—such as the Gunjemans, the Kochaquas, the Chirigriquas, the Namaquas, the Attaquas, etc.—over the whole of South Africa, with the exception of the north-east portions. Here and there tribes of Bushmen occupied large tracks. The Hottentots were nomads, tolerably rich in cattle and sheep—a merry, truthful, numerous people. They lived in kraals, under their chief or captain; practised

polygamy ; believed in a kind of Creator, and worshipped the moon ; were sober and strict in their domestic relations, adultery being punished with death ; were skilful in their own rude fashion in all the handicrafts ; expert in the rearing of cattle and sheep ; and extremely fond of music and dancing. On the other hand, they were excessively dirty, lazy, and gluttonous, and the women especially, horribly ugly. Some of their ideas were very disgusting ; and their practices, to a civilised mind, abominable. They were often engaged in quarrels, and cultivated the soil very little. They could not but give way before a superior civilisation.

The Bushmen constituted the waif of society. They spoke a different language, which, although it probably sprung from the same source as the Hottentot, was by this time more unlike it than English is to Latin. They were of a restless, thieving disposition. Between them and the Hottentots there was constant hostility. They had sunk almost as low as it was possible to imagine. Like the ancient cave men of Europe, they lived in a cave or hole in the ground, covered over by a few sticks and grass. Their strength lay in the expert use of their poisoned arrows. When on the war-path, these were borne on the head, in order to make them look more formidable to their foes. Like the Hottentots, they were disgustingly gluttonous. When they stole an ox or killed some large game, they ate till they could hardly move, and then starved on a few roots for perhaps a fortnight, for, like certain wild animals, they could remain long without food. They were of small stature and hideous appearance, especially in times of famine ; were possessed of acute sight ; used a few stone implements ; were unsurpassed in keenness of vision and fleetness of foot ; had a passionate love of liberty, and were fond of painting on rocks the figures of all kinds of animals.

As before stated, the Dutch law had made provision against these Hottentots and Bushmen being enslaved. But as the Boers advanced they did not dream of sharing the soil with the natives. So they were gradually deprived of it—sometimes under pretext of purchase; sometimes by being hunted off it—and reduced to a state of serfdom. This they did without any scruple—they looked upon themselves as the Israelite in the midst of a horde of Canaanites, who must either serve, or suffer extermination. The Hottentots were found the more tractable. They lost their freedom almost unconsciously; but the case was different with the Bushmen, and the wilder spirits among the former, who chose the profession of marauder rather than sacrifice their old free mode of life. No doubt the depredations of these robbers and of the thieving Bushmen must often have been very galling to the farmers. We must make allowance for the rough acts of men in such unsettled circumstances. But things were done which it is not very easy to palliate by any excuse. The frontier Boers required servants, and as it was not to be expected that a Bushman, brought up as a free child of the desert, would for any reason sell his liberty and suddenly become a steady workman, they were simply hunted down, the men killed, and the women and children carried off. There was always a pretext, and often there was cause for punishment, but this kind of wholesale murder to revenge a stolen ox, or for the sake of obtaining a few shepherds and domestics, is most shocking. Here are some examples. One commander, with the approval of government, killed during the space of eight days, in September 1774, as many as ninety-six Bushmen. The women and children taken prisoners, were divided among the members of the expedition. Another, sent out about the same date, shot 142. In these cases the number of the wounded would greatly exceed that of the

killed, as the miserable creatures "never ceased to run and scramble among the rocks in search of hiding-places, till hope forsook them, appearing to dread being taken more than death itself." Here are a few extracts from the journal of one of the commandants of these expeditions.

"Aug. 4th 1775.—We proceeded in a north-east direction to the upper end of the Seacow River, when we met, unawares, one of these cattle plunderers, and also saw a great many of these thieves at a distance. In order to create no suspicion in the mind of the thief we had caught, we behaved peaceably to him, in order to get the other thieves in our power. Wherefore it was thought good by every one in the commando to inform this Bushman that we came as friends, and were only journeying to the above-mentioned river to kill sea cows. We gave him a pipe and tobacco and sent him to his companions to offer them our peace, so that they also might come to us to show us the right road to the river. But we have not seen that thief since." "6th.—Took twelve men and two waggons, with which I went to Rondekop; when on the road we unexpectedly met with five thieves, and addressed them in the same way as we did the first one; and as a token of peace, we killed a sea cow for them at the Kop." "10th.—Proceeded from Blauwe Bank along the river about two hours, with the whole commando, to a place called by us Keerom, whence, the manners of the natives being known to me by experience, I despatched the same evening some spies to Blauwe Bank, to learn whether the Bushmen were not with the sea cows (that had been killed at a certain point to entice them); for they will always assemble in the night, where they know something is to be had. About midnight the spies returned, saying they had seen a great number of Bushmen there, when I immediately repaired thither with the commando, waiting till daybreak, which soon appeared;

and having divided the commando into parties, we slew the thieves, and, on searching, found 122 dead; five escaped, by swimming across the river."

It must be observed that "the thieves," of whom this hero quite laconically talks, were the ancient inhabitants of the land, who very probably considered themselves quite justified in robbing the intruder.

This expedition afterwards surrounded a kraal, and either killed or captured all its inhabitants. Two spies were about the same time sent out with two Bushmen, who had promised to show where some of their countrymen were concealed. Instead of conducting them right, they only deceived them. A few days later seven spies were sent out with them, and they were threatened with death if they again led them astray, but assured of life if they took them to the right spot. After proceeding about an hour, the Bushmen, resolving not to betray their comrades, fell upon the ground, and behaved as if they were dead. When no answer could be obtained from them, blows were inflicted, but as their determination was inflexible, and the invaders could not remove them, they were shot dead on the spot. This is an instance of heroism comparable with anything of its kind in ancient and modern times. But it did not save those, whom the Boers were determined at all hazards to destroy. The kraal was discovered—a number of caves,—and forty-three were killed, and seven children taken captive.

Of course retaliations were made when possible, and the consequence was a most inveterate hatred between Boers and Bushmen, with its accompaniment of murder and pillage on both sides.

As to the Hottentots in the service of the farmers, we fear it fared rather hard with them in a considerable number of cases. Barrow and Dr. Philip mention some of shocking

brutality, which we shall hope were exceptional. Still to the frontier Boers, if they were but a little provoked, native life seems not to have been worth a thought. Barrow relates that, when accompanying General Vandeleur in his expedition to restore order between the frontier Boers and the Hottentots, who had been driven to take up arms in their own defence, they one day stopped at a house to feed the horses. "By accident we observed a young Hottentot woman, with a child in her arms, lying stretched on the ground in a most deplorable condition. She had been cut from head to foot with one of those infernal whips, made from the hide of a rhinoceros, known by the name of *sambocs*, in such a barbarous and unmerciful manner, that there was scarcely a spot on her whole body free from stripes; nor had the sides of the little infant, in clinging to its mother, escaped the strokes of the brutal monster. With difficulty we had her removed to a situation where medical assistance could be given; but the fever ran so high, and the body was bruised to such a degree, that for several days there were little hopes of her recovery. It was a punishment far inadequate to the crime, to keep the inhuman wretch on bread and water, who had been guilty of such unmanly cruelty, until the fate of the sufferer was decided. Owing to a good constitution she gradually recovered, and the fellow was suffered to depart after making her a pecuniary compensation. Had the wounds proved mortal, he would no doubt have afforded the first instance of retributive justice for the numberless cases of murder, that have been committed with impunity on this unfortunate race. The only crime against her was the attempt to follow her husband, who was among the number of his countrymen, that had determined to throw themselves upon the protection of the English."

"The next house at which we halted presented us with a

still more horrid instance of brutality. We observed a fine Hottentot boy, about eight years of age, sitting at the corner of the house, with a pair of iron rings clenched round his legs, of the weight of ten or twelve pounds, and they had remained in one situation for such a length of time that they appeared to have sunk into the leg. The poor creature was so benumbed and oppressed with the weight, that being unable to walk with ease, he crawled on the ground. It appeared, on enquiry, that they had been riveted on his legs more than ten months ago. The fellow shrunk from the enquiries of the indignant General. He had nothing to allege against him but that he had been always a worthless boy, that he had lost him so many sheep, had slept when he ought to have watched the cattle, etc. The General gave orders to the farrier of the 8th Regiment of Light Dragoons to strike off the irons from the boy, an operation that required great nicety and attention, and clench them on the legs of his master, as tight as he could, who roared and bellowed in the most violent manner, to the inexpressible satisfaction of the bystanders. Having roared for three days and as many nights, he was suffered to go about his business, on paying a penalty in money for the benefit of the boy, whom he had so shamefully treated."

A Boer from Graaf Reynet, while in the Secretary's office at Cape Town, was asked if the savages (bushmen) were troublesome on the road. "I only shot four," was his reply, with as much composure as if he had been speaking of four partridges.

Being wholly at the mercy of the farmer, who had no superior to check his excesses, the unfortunate bondsman had to suffer the most cruel punishments. If death resulted from illusage, the former had nothing to loose, as was the case with the slave, so that the poor serf had not even this slight protection. Choice of master or employment was

hardly conceded, for the government had given permission to every Boer to claim as his property all the children of the Hottentots up to the age of twenty-five, whom he had supplied in their infancy with the necessities of life, were it but one morsel of bread. Should the father wish to depart at the expiry of one year, he could do so at the risk of losing his children. Quite natural then that the bondsmen lost their former merry, free spirit, and sank in degradation and gloom. They became still more lazy, gluttonous, and frightfully addicted to drunkenness. Their numbers and appearance suffered sorely. It was nothing short of a crime to teach them the truths of the Christian religion. Above the door of one of the Churches was placed a notice to the effect that "dogs and Hottentots" were not allowed to enter. The only redeeming feature in his character was his love of truth. Yet this hated, downtrodden race was daily rendering the most effective services to the Boers. They shepherded their numerous flocks, wandering with them in search of food and water, in heat and cold alike, over bare deserts, infested with wild beasts. For such harsh treatment, as many were subjected to, there can be no palliation, even on the ground of provocation and irascible temperament. Such cases rather point to inherent brutality, and an utter disregard for the rights of a class of human beings, who, as human beings, however far below them, ought to have been treated with consideration towards that sensitiveness which dwells in a human breast. The interior Boers of these days were themselves not so far advanced in civilisation. They were sunk in ignorance, and had descended to the point of wearing skins. Therefore, as the representatives of a higher civilisation in presence of a lower, they do not impress us very favourably. Their contempt for the poor Hottentots might almost rebound upon themselves.

By the time the Colony had become British, the Hotten-

tots living among the Boers of the Graaf Reynet district, on the north-east frontier, had risen in rebellion. Both parties were called to order by the new authorities, and a number of the former allowed to collect at a missionary institution, under Dr. Van der Kemp. Mission stations were planted at several places by the London Missionary Society, since permission was now given to missionaries to labour among the coloured people. But the Hottentots in general remained as before, the serfs of the farmers. Lord Caledon issued a proclamation to the effect, that every travelling Hottentot should have a pass, and that every one, whose term of engagement for a year had expired, should either renew it or engage himself to another master. Had the master always been kind and honest, there would have been no great hardship in this. Some regulation of the habits of a people emerging from barbarism is necessary. But such could easily be abused in the hands of a selfish, unprincipled man. It was very rare, for instance, that the poor serf, if subjected to cruel treatment, could hope for redress from the magistrate. For one thing, he must go to prison—some abominable hole—till the matter came on for consideration; his adversary was ever believed rather than he, and after going through a mere farce of a trial, his only reward would be a good whipping. Or, a Hottentot might lose his pass and be apprehended on the spot, and bound to a master for a year, although his wife and children might be dependent on him in some other district, perhaps a great distance away. Lord Caledon no doubt meant it for their good; but its provisions could be easily twisted to serve the interests of the masters. This proclamation was followed by that of 1812, by which it was ordained that children, who had been eight years resident with father and mother at a farm, were bound to serve for ten years. This was a very effectual fetter on the liberty of the parents, for

whether such service was agreeable or not, they had only the alternative of continued and perhaps perpetual serfdom (for they might be cheated as to age), or separation from their children. Meanwhile, in the unsettled north-west frontier districts, the extermination of the Bushmen and the capture of their children were still carried on. The need of servants, as well as the necessity of punishing them for their depredations, was the cause of this. Then Dr. Philip published his researches in South Africa, in which he exposed the miserable condition of the coloured people, and pleaded for just treatment being accorded them. There is doubtless as much of the missionary partisan as the philanthropist in his book, and we cannot accept, in the teeth of the more favourable account of Lichtenstein, his sweeping denunciations of the Boers; but he showed, without possibility of doubt, that the Hottentots and Bushmen were often horribly oppressed, and that there was a loud call for the British to reform the laws under which such oppression was possible. "The Hottentots, generally speaking, have no motives to industry; the lawful fruits of their labour are not secured to them; they are robbed and cheated and oppressed in every possible way; and the filthiness of their huts is no more than the natural consequences arising from the state of mental depression in which they are held."

At length, in 1828, the British Parliament took up the matter, and the Hottentots were placed on the same footing as Europeans. The emancipation of the slaves followed, in 1833, four years' apprenticeship being decreed. These acts excited much indignation among the Boers, and certainly they had cause for exasperation at the unjust manner in which they were carried out. Of the effect of freedom on the Hottentots Mr. Theal says, "The Hottentots and free people of colour from this date, rapidly rose in the scale of civilisation. As free peasants they soon acquired comforts,

which as serfs they never enjoyed. The mixed race is now increasing—the best proof that the crisis in their fate is past. A few possess a good share of property, and most profess Christianity.”

The result in regard to the slaves is described by the same author as no less satisfactory. “The 1st December 1838 was looked forward to with the greatest joy by the slaves, with the greatest dread by their masters. These apprehended not only injury to themselves personally, but a complete disruption of society. Never were men more mistaken. In very few instances, indeed, did the freedmen remain over the day in the service of their late masters, but their conduct everywhere was most exemplary. Many were affected with religious fervour, and spent the first day of their liberty giving thanks to God for the great blessing conferred on them. Others congregated together and spent the day in feasting. The emancipators have had no reason to blush on account of the conduct of the freedmen since. For a time many withdrew from the service of the farmers. Agriculture thus received a temporary check, but only to be carried on afterwards with redoubled energy and increased success. The slaves and their descendants quickly and quietly became merged with the great body, forming the labouring class of the Colony, which is as free from crime as any peasantry of the world.”

In the face of these facts, we are much surprised to read the remarks of Mr. Froude on this subject in his “Two Lectures on South Africa.” Evidently the lecturer has not read the works bearing on it; but has simply written from hearsay—gained among the Boers, who are apt to be one-sided in their dealings with the coloured man. We must confess, however, that we dissent from Mr. Theal’s opinion regarding the condition of the descendants of the old serfs and slaves. The practice of the winefarmers of giving

their workmen large quantities of wine daily to induce them to work, as well as the frequency of their visits to the canteens in the villages, has told heavily on the race. Drink, with the filthy mode of life, accompanying it, is undoubtedly enervating them, and their Christianity is, in many cases, as in other lands, a very formal thing.

In regard to the question, whether slavery now exists among the far interior Boers, as is often asserted by Englishmen, we incline to answer in the negative. No case has ever come under our notice in our travels, and even such an anti-Boer as Mr. Anthony Trollope, has made the same declaration. There is much loose talk on this subject at home—founded, of course, not on facts, but on hearsay. The Boer has a stricter method of dealing with the black than we, and in frontier districts is inclined to be cruel; but slavery in the old sense is defunct. Opinion has changed considerably in the Cape Colony, at anyrate, on this subject. Many of the Boers now consider it to be their duty to teach their servants Christianity, for instance. The stranger is disagreeably struck with one trait in their treatment of the blacks, however,—the rough way they have of lording it over them. They do not hesitate to use their tongue and hands in the most violent manner, and, herein, we have found English and Scotch as great sinners as the Dutch. They get into a bullying habit, and expect that Kaffir and Hottentot will bend the knee and own their superior intelligence, because their white skin may give them the liberty to strike a blow, or utter an oath with impunity.

CHAPTER XV.

CIVILISATION AND WAR!



AS we roam for nearly 800 miles from Cape Point into the interior of South Africa, we are struck with the many marks of an already advanced civilisation, everywhere discoverable in our progress. Splendid towns, pretty villages, fine farms, happy homes—railways, telegraphs, roads, bridges, irrigation—education, missions, refinement, luxury! We do not recognise the half-barbarous land, of which we used to read in the pages of the “Edinburgh Encyclopædia.” But then civilisation has made great strides all over the world, and here also, during the last half-century. Now, amid the smiles of peace, we could imagine that this land of sunshine had never known the cloud and storm of race hatred and conflict. Yet it has only reached this point through fearful scenes of carnage. War has preceded, like a dark shadow, the march of civilisation throughout South Africa. The Hottentot and Bushman looked upon the white man as an intruder, and naturally sought to check an advance, which they saw would interfere with their independence. The Dutch colonist, on the other hand, wished to secure an inheritance in the land, and while content at first to be the neighbour on sufferance of the coloured man, by-and-bye came to ignore any native rights whatever, and to consider himself entitled to take what he could lay his hands on. By the beginning of the present century, when the British came upon the scene, he

had become absolute lord of the Hottentot, and was busy shooting down the obnoxious Bushman. He had also by this time got into slight touch with the Kaffirs. Unlike the docile Hottentot, or the predatory but fugitive Bushman, these were a martial race, and if the advance of civilisation had previously been attended with friction, much more was this the case now. As strangers, unaffected by old sores, we were naturally milder and more impartial in our treatment of the black, than the Boer had been. Still Kaffir barbarism would not be subdued by soft words and benevolent intentions. It was animated by the restless desire to sweep onwards to the extremity of South Africa, and drive its European foe into the sea, whereas the white man was pressed forward by the necessity of expansion. Hence the fearful wars and devastations that mark his advance. The struggle for the mastery, which lasted fifty years, and is known as the Kaffir Wars, reads like some of those terrible movements of the nations in ancient times. Greek and Persian, Roman and Goth, Frank and Moor struggled with no grimmer fury than have Kaffir and Briton.

The Kaffirs are a distinct race from the Hottentots, whom they have apparently at some time driven back to the western and more arid parts of South Africa. They occupy the eastern and more fertile region. They are a division of the Bantu family, which inhabits the dark continent till far into the interior. Other members are the Zulus, Basutos, Bechuanas, Pondos, etc.; well known to English readers from the connection—military, commercial, missionary—which we have had with them. The name Kaffir, which is the Arabic for unbeliever, is often applied to all these, but in its stricter sense it is used of the inhabitants of Kaffraria. It was with the latter, named in their own language, Amaxosa, that the British now came into

contact. The colonial boundary was then the Great Fish River. The Amaxosa were divided into two tribes, the Gaikas and Galekas. The former resided between the Great Fish River and the Kei; the latter beyond the Kei. On the colonial side of the Great Fish River a few Kaffir clans, under the chiefs Slambie, Cungwa, etc., and related to the Gaikas, had taken up their abode. These were becoming very troublesome. Stocklifting, accompanied sometimes by acts of violence, was daily perpetrated. It was therefore resolved in 1811 to expel them.

The British force, under the command of Colonel Graham, advanced in three columns. An untoward accident hastened hostilities. Landdrost Stockenstrom, the commander of the left column, having left his camp for the purpose of having an interview with the commander in chief, met on the way a party of the enemy. Being well known to them, and hoping to persuade them to retire without bloodshed, he rode into their midst, and dismounting, entered into friendly converse. The Kaffirs seemed conciliated, but news arriving at that moment that blood had already been shed, they became mad with rage, and murdered the brave old man, and as many of his companions, fourteen in all, as could not escape. A terrible retaliation followed this cruel act. The enemy were shot down, their kraals burnt, their crops destroyed, and their cattle seized. The chief, Cungwa, was slain, but Slambie and 20,000 of his people managed to escape across the river. A chain of forts was drawn along the boundary, as a barrier between the colonists and their enemies. But as soon as 1819, there was war again. The treaty concluded by Lord Charles Somerset, the Governor, with Gaika, king of the tribe of that name, to the effect that any kraal, to which cattle, stolen from the colony, should be traced, should make restitution, had been violated by Slambie and other subordinate chiefs, who would not

respect the king's authority. On reprisals being made by a commando, they determined to take revenge on Gaika, whose army they skilfully led into an ambush, when a most desperate combat took place, in which his forces were nearly annihilated. This was the terrible battle of Amalinde, whose disastrous issue had been foretold by the Christian sage Ktsikana, who thus spoke: "Listen, son of Mlàu, to the words of the servant of God, and do not cross the Xesi. I see the Amangaika scattered on the mountains. I see their heads spread out on the ground. The enemy is watching there, and defeat awaits your plumed ones. Are there not cattle left, even many cattle, the cattle of the great chief." The injured chief appealed to the Governor for help, and as he was regarded as a powerful ally, a large combined British and burgher force was sent to his assistance. The rebellious Kaffirs were defeated, but so irritated were Slambie and his confederates by this invasion, that they determined to pay it back by an irruption into the Colony. Makana, a great witch doctor and hero, was the chief inspirer of the movement. He predicted that they should receive supernatural aid. Grahamstown was accordingly attacked by an overwhelming swarm, and had it not been for the bravery of its little garrison, and the timely aid of some Hottentot hunters, who happened to be there, it would have been taken and its defenders massacred. Again Kaffirland was the scene of British invasion, to chastise the confederate clans, who were driven back and 30,000 of their cattle captured. But Makana, to prevent further trouble, gave himself up. He was taken to Robben Island, where he was drowned, while attempting to escape. He is held in memory as one of the greatest heroes of Kaffirland. For a long time the people expected him to return and lead them to victory.

The colonial boundary was then moved forward, and two

forts built at advanced points. The country up to the Kei was left unoccupied, but it was soon found advisable to throw it open to missions and trade. Periodical fairs were held at Fort Willshire, and free trade in everything, except munitions of war and intoxicating liquors, was allowed.

As usual, the lull was far from being permanent. Maqoma, one of the great sons, and the successor, of Gaika, was bitterly hostile to the white man, and conceived the idea of uniting his father's people with those of Slambie, who was likewise dead. The object of the coalition was the destruction of the colonists. Cattle-stealing was again indulged in and reprisals made, which, as had ever been the case, were the preliminaries of hostilities. Accordingly a great horde burst over the frontier on the 23rd of December, 1834, burning, robbing, and murdering, as it went. The inhabitants fled to Grahamstown, where 2000 assembled, who a week or two before, had been in affluent circumstances, but were now quite destitute. The widow of Gaika, Sutu, protected the missionaries, otherwise they might have shared the same fate with traders and others, who were overtaken and struck down. Troops were hurried up; the Galekas, under their chief Hintsa, who was suspected of aiding the invaders, were subdued, and the latter, who had retired to their strongholds, were at length crushed. The result of this war was enormous loss of property to the colonists, the excitement of great hatred towards the Kaffirs, and the movement of the boundary to the Kei. Unfortunately, the action of Lord Glenelg, the then Secretary for the Colonies, did not tend to throw oil on the ruffled waters. He declared the Kaffirs the wronged party, and ordered the conquered territory to be given back. The colonists were naturally highly incensed, after the suffering which they had endured. The Kaffirs interpreted his Lordship's philanthropy as weakness, and, notwithstanding the wise plans


of Sir Benjamin D'Urban, of ruling them through their own chiefs, and, as far possible, according to their own customs, by 1849 another conflict was raging. Sandile and Maqoma, the great chiefs of the Gaikas, were thirsting for bloodshed ; so a very trifling incident served for a pretext.

A Kaffir, who had often been convicted of theft, was caught at Fort Beaufort in the act of stealing an axe. Manacled to a Hottentot prisoner, he was sent to Grahams-town under the charge of a small escort. On the way he was rescued by a party of his countrymen, who liberated him from his fetters by simply cutting off the arm of the wretched Hottentot, who bled to death. Hence the designation, "The War of the Axe." A British force then crossed the frontier, but, being outgeneralled by the enemy, and having suffered the loss of their whole train of waggons, it was forced back, and took refuge in the mission buildings of Lovedale. Then the Kaffirs pressed into the colony, and the blazing homesteads soon told of the terrible destruction wrought by them. But at Fort Peddie—the only other place, beside Lovesdale, held by the British beyond the frontier—they suffered a reverse. In this attack, a small chief, Jan Tshatshu, a professed Christian, who had visited Europe and adopted civilised habits, took part. From a military point of view, his presence, as an enemy, was of no importance, but his defection from a civilised life was a source of disappointment to those, who were earnestly desirous of the improvement of his race.

The extremity of the military was but momentary. More troops arrived, and about a fortnight after their attack on Fort Peddie, the Kaffirs were made conscious of the mettle of a British cavalry force. On the 7th of June, a large body of their finest warriors were suddenly charged by a squadron of dragoons, and ridden down and sabred by hundreds. Paralysed with fear, they broke in headlong flight, and long

after, the survivors spoke of that day with bated breath. An attempt was then made to expel them from their strongholds in the Amatola Mountains, with such success, that many of the chiefs—who saw that their efforts to roll back the advancing colonists were again becoming futile, and that there must soon come famine, if they did not plant in season—submitted. But several, among them Kreli, chief of the Galekas, still held out, and the war was continued in a desultory fashion under the governorship of Sir Henry Pottinger, who had replaced Sir Peregrine Maitland. Trading was forbidden in their territory, in order that they should not obtain supplies of ammunition; but as they always had abundance, which seemed to come through the passive party, it was suspected that these were only nominally inactive. Sandile, in fact, was soon afterwards proclaimed a rebel, and there would have been a general rising, had not superstition deterred the other chiefs. The British had established a port on the coast of Kaffirland, and there was a popular belief in the existence of an ancient prediction that, when sea-waggons should appear at the mouth of the Buffalo, Kaffirland would die. This discouraged them. Sandile, after an exciting chase, surrendered, and Pato soon followed his example.

New boundaries having been arranged, and the new native province of British Kaffraria erected, the various tribes were put under the government of their chiefs, subject to the superintendence of officers appointed by the Governor. Three years of trial, and it became evident that the chiefs were longing to throw off this restraint to absolute sway in their own countries. The troops had been withdrawn—a proceeding which has so often brought calamity to South Africa—so that they felt themselves no longer overawed by the presence of superior force. The superstition of their countrymen was dangerously offended by the strict suppression of sorcery, which, being accompanied by so much



outrage and bloodshed, no civilised Power could tolerate in territories under its protection. They likewise felt too secure, living in the fastnesses of the Amatola Mountains, to be long passive. Accordingly Mlanjeni, patronised by the chiefs, went about preaching war, promising his dupes superhuman aid this time, to drive the white man into the sea. Such commotions followed, that Sir Harry Smith thought it necessary to send a force, under command of Colonel MacKinnon, up the Keiskama, for the purpose of overawing the Kaffirs, and reassuring the colonists. But he had trusted too much to Kaffir protestations of peace. The force was surprised at the Boomah Pass, and only held its ground after a severe conflict. A small patrol of fifteen soldiers of the 45th Regiment was surrounded, and cut to pieces, their bodies being stripped and horribly mutilated. The following day, Christmas, frightful massacres were perpetrated. The three military villages of Woburn, Johannesburg, and Auckland, on the River Chumie, where retired soldiers had been settled some years before, were attacked and burnt. Woburn was first set upon, all its defenders murdered, and the houses laid in ashes. Fortunately the inhabitants of Johannesburg saw the smoke of the burning cottages, and, being thus warned in time, escaped,—all except three men, who were overtaken and killed,—but their village was given to the flames. The worst fate awaited those of Auckland. Shut up in a most beautiful spot among the Amatola Mountains, the villagers could not see what was going on at the others; and so, as they were assembled, joyously celebrating Christmas, the black demons burst upon them, and assailed the greater part of the men. A few managed to take refuge, with the women and children, in a sodhouse, which they defended during the night. A fearful struggle was hopelessly maintained, until all their ammunition was expended, and fires were placed round the

house by the Kaffirs. Forced out by the fire and smoke, they were all murdered. The women and children were spared.

For nearly two years, hostilities were kept up by the rebel chiefs. Moreover, they were joined by the Hottentots settled in the Eastern Province, who complained that they were being oppressed by the colonists, and were irritated, because they considered themselves ill-repaid for services rendered in former wars. They were more formidable foes, because trained to the use of firearms. Their leader was one Uithaarder, who wished to form a great independent Hottentot nation. Twice the Kaffirs swept down on the colony, causing much misery. Meanwhile Sir George Cathcart made incessant efforts to clear the mountainous country with its difficult recesses, such as the Waterkloof. The Hottentot revolt was suppressed. The Tembus were next dealt with, and then the Gaika chiefs, harried out of their territories, fled over the Kei. At length messengers came to say that their strength was gone, and that they only wished a place where they could be located. They were commanded to remain on the far side of the river, their lands and those of the faithless Hottentots and Tembus, being filled with Europeans and those tribes, such as the Fingos, who had been helpful to the British. The occupation of the frontier by such a large body of Europeans and friendly natives was thought to ensure a permanent peace. The plan of government adopted towards the conquered, which was enlightened and philanthropic, was also considered as tending to this end. It was not to assert British authority in all its fullness, but to limit that of the chiefs only where it was incompatible with the civilised model, and so, by suppressing the worst of their customs, and bringing them under the influence of missionaries and magistrates, gradually to raise them in civilisation. To have struck a blow at the autho-

city of the chiefs at once, would have been to invite perpetual anarchy. This plan had originated with Sir Benjamin D'Urban—had been, as far as possible in the difficult circumstances, carried out by Sir Harry Smith, but had not until now had a fair trial.

The successor of Sir George Cathcart, Sir George Grey who arrived in 1855, sought in many admirable ways to encourage further the civilisation of these people. He desired, in a peaceful yet effective way, to uproot their ignorance, superstition, and indolence. In his own words—"Gradually to make them a part of ourselves, with a common faith and common interests; useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue—in short, a source of strength and wealth to the colony, such as Providence designed them to be." He gave large grants for the purpose of establishing industrial schools, founded a great hospital at King William's Town, where the natives might learn a better cure than that which the witch doctor had to give them, and gave them scope to trade and labour so that they might acquire industrious habits. Under such wise measures, everything promised well. Yet, in a twinkling, the old love of independence and hatred of the white man, coupled with attachment to the chiefs, broke out in one terrible, rash act. Towards the end of 1856 a prophetess, Nonquase, appeared on the other side of the Kei. She and her father, Mhlahaza, proclaimed that by the side of a river near their hut they had met four strangers, among them Mhlahaza's long-dead brother, who announced that, coming from battlefields across the sea, they were the eternal enemies of the white man, and were commissioned to aid the Kaffirs in driving him from the land. The chief condition of success was, that all cattle should be destroyed. They were to feast in idleness until the day of deliverance. But what a recompense would be forthcoming! On a

certain day myriads of most beautiful cattle should rise from the earth and cover all the pastures! Great fields of waving corn should in an instant appear! The ancient heroes should lead to victory! Only for those who would not obey was reserved a terrible fate! Let the Fingos and whites and the followers of Kama beware!

Instantly the chiefs, some of whom are said to have been the instigators of this delusion, gave heed to these revelations. Kreli, Maqoma, Pato, etc., professed to believe, and acted together. But there was a strong party of unbelievers, especially among Sandile's powerful tribe, who broke the unity of the movement. Still a large part of Kaffirland was in a terrible state of infatuation. The cattle were being fast destroyed, great kraals prepared to contain the new supplies, enormous vessels to receive the milk. At length the prophetess fixed a day—the 19th February 1857—by which date the people were at the point of starvation. They waited the dawn of the morning with most anxious expectation. All night they had watched, having shut themselves up in their kraals to escape the hurricane that was to destroy the unbelievers and the whites. The morning came, throwing a silver sheen upon the mountain peaks, and bathing hillside and valley in a flood of light, as the ruler of day appeared. The hearts of the watchers sank within them. "What," said they, "will become of us if Mhlahaza's prediction turn out untrue?" It was the first time they had asked such a question. But, perhaps, after all, it might be mid-day that was meant, and when the shadows began to lengthen towards the east, perhaps, thought they, the setting of the sun is the time. The sun went down behind clouds of crimson and gold, and the Amaxosa awoke to the reality of their dreadful position. Then famine did its work. Father fought with son for food. Many ran to the coast, and tried to subsist on shell-

fish; but, being unaccustomed to this diet, became victims of dysentery. Many families sat down and died, sometimes fifteen skeletons being found beneath a tree. Charred human bones were found in pots, telling their dreadful tale of cannibalism. The lowest calculation is that 25,000 of them died; ordinary calculations give double that number, while many more would have perished had not the authorities done all in their power to supply food. Nonquase escaped into the Colony, where she was still living in 1876, very chary of speaking of her part in this dreadful tragedy. Mhlahaza was starved with the rest of his dupes, as became the rascal's deserts.

Although superstition was most likely to blame for this strange occurrence, it is supposed that political reasons were also at the bottom of it. Some think that the inspiration came from colonial sources; others that Kreli himself was the instigator of the movement, planning in his stupidity, that if the people were worked up to the desperate alternative of raiding or starving, war would be inevitable, and likely to be successful. 'Twas indeed a clumsy plot, if plot there was, and a terrible illustration to boot of the power of superstition. It proved a final blow to the resistance of these Kaffir chiefs.

During the last thirty years that have elapsed since this terrible tragedy, our relations with the natives have been much more amicable. The Basutos were so good as to ask us to protect them from the encroachments of the Boers, and in 1868 events led us to annex their country. A little war with Kreli in 1877-78 resulted in the incorporation of his territory with the Cape Colony. We then absorbed that small portion of Pondoland, situated at the mouth of St. John's River. About forty years ago we relieved the Boers from the responsibility of governing Natal, an act of magnanimity which gave us the Zulus for our neighbours.

With them peace was maintained till 1879, when the great Zulu war, still fresh in the memory of most of our readers, broke out. Although it ended with the dethronement of Cetewayo, our boundary remained the same as before. With the exception of Pondoland, situated between Cape Colony and Natal, the British Dominion on the eastern coast now extends from Cape Point to the Tugela.* Pondoland to all appearance will likewise soon be engulfed. Our advance on the western side, through Griqualand West and far into Bechuanaland, which has been almost entirely unattended with war, will be touched on in the next chapter.

The question now naturally arises—Is the march of civilisation through so much bloodshed justifiable by a great Christian nation? Superficially considered, it seems natural to conclude that we had no right thus to take the territory of another by force. But when we remember that there was no possibility of making parley with neighbours who would not rest till they had tried their hands upon our person and property, the struggle appears in another light. The necessity of self-defence against a southward striving horde makes it justifiable from the side of civilisation, and then the natural tendency of the latter to subjugate and abolish barbarism impels it forward. It was only when endangered by their attack or provoked by their depredations that force was used against them. We do not wish to become the apologist of the merely selfish policy of politicians, as far as it was selfish, but only desire to point out that this bloody march was necessary, because a trial of strength between black and white was unavoidable, and desirable because civilisation is better than barbarism left to its dark devices. The results have been good, and

* Since writing the above, a portion of Zululand has been annexed.

we, in this age of missions, philanthropy, and progress, are most concerned with them. Behold schools where previously there were none, roads where before only sheep-paths, beautiful houses instead of wretched huts, decent clothing instead of the barbarous kaross, order instead of confusion, the Christian teacher instead of the witch doctor, a high intelligence instead of a merely animal life! The picture of such a present withdraws attention from the past, and were it not for the murderous effects of brandy introduced by the white man, and the loose morality sometimes exhibited by him, our delight on beholding it would be unmingled.

CHAPTER XVI.

HEROISM AND TRAGEDY.



UE had for a long time considered South African history very barren of anything of general exciting interest. The heroic and the tragic, which afford materials for an epic, we had been accustomed to search for amid those much sung scenes where our European ancestors "stormed across the war-convulsed earth." It may have been because in the northern hemisphere there are innumerable relics of the past—ancient castles, battlefields, monuments—which speak of far-off heroic deeds, and keep the memory of the fearful throes in human experience still fresh. In South Africa, all is speechless and unmarked—weatherbeaten cromlech, venerable stronghold, ancient epic—none. A land without a past, like a man without a character, is our constant impression! You can make anything of that limitless stretch of sky and earth, for it seems to have no definite ancient traits, such as the tragedies of our forefathers have given to those of the north. But stay; we have forgotten those other marks in history, with which so much tragic struggle is associated. Great ideas—those of authority and government expressed by the state—have had their heroes, that gave them being and moulded their growth. And here are two states amid these interior plains—two great ideas, in the development of which we shall find the heroic and the tragic as plainly imprinted as on the brow of an Achilles, or on the turrets of a Gibraltar.

The Orange Free State and the Transvaal are the result of that great "trek," or immigration into the interior, of which Mr. Froude speaks as a fit subject for an epic poem, "if a man of genius ever arises to write such a thing." Time only is required to throw something of the charm of myth around such heroes as Retief, Maritz, Pretorius, Potgieter, etc., to make them figures of an *Odyssey* or an *Æneid*.

The Briton and the Boer have never assorted well together. The former represents the energetic, philanthropic nineteenth century; the latter, the sterner, slower ways of thinking and acting of his *Africander* ancestors. Hence the opposition speedily offered to British legislation, on the Cape becoming a part of our empire. The limitation of their power over the Hottentots, by making certain offences against them punishable by fine, was the first cause of grumbling, and led to a tragic incident in the year 1815. A farmer named Bezuidenhout, having been summoned before the circuit court for illtreating a Hottentot, and having failed to appear, an officer of the court, accompanied by a party of soldiers, was sent to arrest him. On being warned, and called to surrender, he offered resistance, and in the skirmish that followed, was shot dead. His relatives and friends resolved to take revenge by exciting the people to rebellion, but they were speedily put down, and several of the ringleaders and a large number of their followers taken prisoners. Six were sentenced to be executed; the remainder, numbering thirty-nine, to witness the execution, and then to be banished, imprisoned, or fined, according to the degree of criminality. The execution was a very revolting one, and the impression produced on the crowd of bystanders—many of them near relatives—such as to aggravate the feeling of discontent into that of bitter hostility. It was nurtured in secret, until some further acts of the Government drove them to give open expression to it. Such

was the effect of the Act of 1828, by which the Hottentots were placed on the same footing with Europeans, of that of 1833, by which the slaves were emancipated, and of that of 1835, when the territory, which had been taken from the Kaffirs in the war of that year, was ordered by Lord Glenelg to be given up. Of the justice of the first two, no one at this time of day will doubt; but it is easy to see the rightness of a measure when it is past, and especially when no personal interests are touched, as in the case of those discontented Boers. We must, therefore, make allowance for their opposition to humane measures, the more so when we remember that emancipation meant ruin to many of them, who were on the brink of bankruptcy, or whose slaves were mortgaged; that it took place at a busy season, when labour could not be spared; and that the compensation offered was not only below valuation, but in many cases never received. Of the wrongness of the third act there can be no uncertainty of opinion. The Kaffirs had invaded the lands occupied by the colonists of the eastern division of the colony, murdered all who fell into their hands, destroyed all property lying in their track, and left about 2000 people, who were in a prosperous condition, fugitive and destitute. Hence, coupled with previous provocations, the exasperation of a large portion of the Dutch-speaking people, and their determination to "trek" into untried solitudes, where they could rule after their own fashion.

All were animated by a fanatical hatred of British ideas of government, but additional motives weighed with many. Some desired simply to escape from the restraints of law. Others had been induced to join the movement by false rumours, circulated by interested parties—they were to find incalculable wealth, and rejoice in perfect freedom whither they went. Others expected to get possession of richer lands to the north. Others again, in accordance with their

bigoted religious belief, likened their exodus to that of the Israelites, and hoped, by an advance northwards, to reach the promised land.

Those great interior solitudes whither we find them, in different bands, wending their way—now squatting around some well, spending pleasant days in the open air; anon moving forward in search of fresh pasture, at the expense of an occasional brush with an enemy—had been for many years the scene of great tribal wars and commotions. On the east side of the Drakensbergen dwelt the warlike Zulu. On the west another great family of the Kaffir race, the Bechuanas, more sedentary and less warlike, had spread themselves over the plains stretching north as far as the Zambesi. They were divided into many tribes, such as the Basutos, Makololo, Batlapi, Baralongs, etc. Still further west, and near the frontier of the colony, there had settled several Hottentot clans—Korannas, of pure descent, bastard Griquas, Bergenaars, etc. But a war of extermination, begun by the cruel Zulu tyrant Chaka, had displaced all these from their fixed abodes, and had spread massacre and desolation over this vast territory, each powerful tribe attacking and driving the less powerful before it, after being itself beaten by its superior.

The advancing farmers, then, found the whole country north and north-east of them torn by feud, and deluged with blood. They did not settle together in one district, but broke into two sections, one crossing the Drakensbergen into the beautiful land of Natal, the other remaining on the western side. Let us first follow the fortunes of the former.


When they descended the mountains into the green country, that dips in terraces to the Indian Ocean, it was strangely silent. In a land as large as Scotland, they found only about 2000 inhabitants. The rest had been slaughtered in

the war with Chaka. A party of English adventurers had planted a settlement on the coast, and gathered a number of the wretched natives around them, playing the part of chiefs, and living in Kaffir fashion. With Dingan, the successor of Chaka, whom he had murdered, they succeeded in making a friendly treaty, and, as he was a mighty chief, and considered himself paramount lord of these parts, the Boers on their arrival thought it well to approach him in a friendly manner. Their leader, Pieter Retief, a well-educated, high-principled, able man, who had been driven by the unfairness of the Glenelg Treaty to join the discontented farmers, proposed to purchase from the chief a tract of territory, where he and his friends might settle. He paid him a visit, and persuaded him to cede a portion of land, on condition that the Boers should recover a large number of his cattle, that had been stolen by a Basuto chief. This they successfully accomplished, and then Retief prepared to pay a second visit to Dingan, in order to complete the deed of cession. Many of his companions, suspecting treachery, tried to persuade him not to go, but to send those whose life was of less value to the community, and some even volunteered to go; but he declared, that he would send no one, where he feared to go himself. Accordingly, accompanied by sixty-six picked men, and about thirty Hottentot servants, this modern Regulus reached the Zulu capital on the 2d of February 1838. Dingan appeared delighted to receive them, and readily affixed his mark to the document, by which the land of Natal was ceded to the Boers. For two days he entertained his visitors most royally, the Zulus performing war-dances and sham-fights in their honour, and for their amusement; so that they were thrown off their guard. The following morning, before leaving, Retief and his party went to take leave of Dingan, who sat in his kraal surrounded by his warriors. According to Zulu custom, no one can ap-

proach the king armed. They must therefore leave their arms outside, which they did without suspicion of danger. Graciously received, they were pressed to be seated, and partake of Kaffir beer, freely handed round. Suddenly the signal for their massacre was given by the king, and in a moment they were attacked by 4000 warriors, armed with sticks. Many were murdered at once, but a number, drawing their knives, made a desperate resistance for half-an-hour. They were ultimately all struck down and killed, and their mangled corpses thrown upon a hillock close by, to be devoured by vultures and beasts of prey. Only Mr. Owen, a missionary, was spared, and then the Zulu horde swept on, barbarously murdering men, women, and children, until, having attacked a party of Boers entrenched behind their waggons on the Bushman's River, they met with a great reverse. During a whole day they tried to swarm over this rude bulwark, but the terrible fire of the Boers repulsed every charge. A shot from a 3-pounder at length ploughed through a mass of the enemy, striking down several of their leading men, and causing a precipitate retreat. In this defence, the women conducted themselves as bravely as the men; those who were unable to use muskets themselves loaded spare ones for their husbands and brothers. These heroines were descendants of the old Huguenots, many of them, and they remind us, by their magnificent courage, of our Covenanting ancestresses.

The farmers, although they had sustained a severe blow through the massacres of their heroic leader and his brave companions, determined to attack their enemies in their own country. Many of their friends hastened over the Drakensbergen to their assistance. A commando of about 400 men in two divisions, under Pieter Uys and Hendrik Potgieter, crossed the Tugela. This is indeed one of the most splendid instances of valour on record. 400 against at least 20,000,

and these experienced, disciplined warriors, who durst never retreat, and who, although unacquainted with the gun, well knew how effectually to use the spear! It was splendid, but rash, and could hardly result in more than a momentary success, if not overwhelmed with defeat. And defeat it was, though prodigies of valour were performed. Their wily foe drew them into a long defile, through hills that led to the chief's great place. Seeing the enemy about the opening, the Boers rode up, fired with effect, and then pursued. In this way they were drawn deep into the gorge, and became detached in small parties, when swarms of Zulus, who had all the time been concealed in the ravines on either side, closed in on them, and compelled them to turn back and break through as best they could. This they managed to do by concentrating their fire on a mass of the enemy, and thus clearing a path; but they lost eleven killed, including the gallant Piet Uys and his son, a boy of thirteen years. Uys had escaped, but seeing some of his men in danger, returned, and, with a handful of followers, drove a whole regiment before him. But the enemy swarmed everywhere, and returned the attack, killing several of his men, and whilst the leader stopped to sharpen the flint of his gun, a Zulu approached, and, throwing an assegai, wounded him mortally in the loins. Notwithstanding, he struggled on, but soon fainted from loss of blood, and desired to be laid on the ground. He then said to his son and his other followers—"Here I must die; you cannot get me on any further, and there is no use to try it. Save yourselves, but fight like brave fellows to the last, and hold God before your eyes." Seeing that certain death awaited them, if they lingered longer, they complied with his request. Galloping for about 100 yards, the son, on looking round, saw the Zulus closing in upon his dying father, who at the same moment raised his head. This was more than the




heroic boy could stand. He rushed back alone, and, before he fell beside his father's corpse, shot dead three out of the overwhelming numbers that surrounded him.

The Zulus, thus irresistible within their own boundaries, there was nothing for it but to retreat beyond the river and act on the defensive. So long as they kept within their laagers, they were safe, as the enemy invariably recoiled before their terrible fire. Everywhere else Dingan was master. The English chiefs, who had revolted with their followers, and had invaded Zululand about the same time as the Boers, were annihilated in a desperate battle. The farmers were, therefore, in the miserable plight of having to lead a garrison life within the bulwark formed by their waggons. But with the advent of a new leader, Pretorius, after a few months of inaction and suffering, and the arrival of some friends from the other side of the Drakensbergen, their prospects brightened, and they determined to try another invasion. Pretorius was a plain farmer, whose only education had consisted in instruction in Bible history—a calm, plainly dressed, unassuming man; but brave and energetic. Under him, as Commandant-General, two bodies, about 800 strong, the other led by Carl Landman, moved over the Tugela in December. Advancing far into Zululand they were suddenly attacked in their laager by Dingan's forces, 10,000 or 12,000 strong. Up to the waggons they pressed, almost bearing in upon the defenders by sheer weight of numbers, but Pretorius ordering 200 horsemen to take them in flank at a point where they were wedged into a huge crowd, they broke and fled, leaving 3000 slain behind. The loss of the Boers was 5 killed and as many wounded. A terrible revenge had they taken for the massacre of Retief and his men. The chief set fire to his capital and fled in terror. Near it, on a little hillock, they found the remains of their murdered friends. The skele-

tons still bore traces of the thoroughness with which the savages had done their bloody work. From the shoulders of that of Retief hung the leathern pouch in which was the deed of cession of Natal to the Boers.

On their return from this expedition, they found that British soldiers had been sent to the Bay of Natal to interpose between them and the natives. They did not remain long however. Another struggle with Dingan was imminent, but this time disunion among the Zulus gave the Boers the advantage. Panda, brother of the chief, sought to grasp the reins of power. He had a large following and entered into an alliance with them, and with his army of 4000 men, accompanied a commando, raised by Pretorius, for another invasion of Zululand. There was a desperate battle fought between the two Zulu forces. Death or victory was the alternative; flight never. Regiment after regiment of veterans perished, and not until the arrival of the commando, which had been many miles distant at the commencement of the battle, was it decided in favour of Panda's party. Dingan was shortly afterwards murdered, and Panda was made king of the Zulus by the Boers, by whom the right of suzerainty was retained.

They then proceeded to erect a Government to manage their own affairs. Natal was divided into twelve wards, each of which sent two representatives to the Council or Volksraad. Their most important officer was the Commandant-General, who had large military powers. Peace and order being thus established, they settled down on their farms. Thousands of natives soon settled in their midst, to whom such protection was as Elysium after the horrid tyranny of the Zulu chiefs. The young men were forced to work at stated times, but what was that compared with Zulu slavery? In a short time there were nearly 100,000 natives in Natal, which before had been but a silent graveyard.



This picture of peace was disturbed by a feud with the Pondos, some of whose children the Boers had stolen in return for cattle taken. The chief complained, and the British interfered. A small force was sent to annex the country. This it was not able to effect until strengthened by reinforcements from the Cape, when the Boers submitted. The more violent and irreconcilable party among them, recrossed the Drakensbergen, beyond the reach, as they hoped, of English interference. They were followed later by a large number under Pretorius, who had made a long journey to the Cape to represent their grievances to the Governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, but had been refused audience. Incensed at this ignoble conduct, and notwithstanding the efforts of Sir Harry Smith, the following Governor, to reconcile them, "they trekked" away over the Drakensbergen into the country beyond the Vaal.

We now turn to those who had remained on the western side of the Drakensbergen. The great tyrant of this country was Moselekatze, who, with a band of Zulu warriors, called by the Bechuanas, Matabeles, had fled thither to escape the wrath of Chaka. The wave of desolation raised by him swept southwards through the various tribes with devastating force, until it was arrested on the one hand by the Basutos, on their impregnable fortress, Thaba Bosigo, on the other by the Griquas with their firearms. The Boers found the great plain between these two tribes almost without a single inhabitant, and moved northward without opposition. Unsuspecting and unprepared, some detached parties were suddenly attacked by one of Moselekatze's bands and massacred. The remainder formed a laager, and though greatly outnumbered, repulsed the furious Matabeles, who did not retire, however, without carrying away all the farmers' cattle. This serious blow forced them to retrace their steps to the country of Moroko, the friendly

chief of the Barolonga. There they found a large number of their friends, and it was then decided to send a commando under Gert Maritz to crush Moselekatze's people. Crossing the Vaal and Hart Rivers, they arrived near Mosega, one of the chief military kraals of the Matabele, about a fortnight after starting. They made a sudden attack, and without losing a man, shot 400 of the enemy, captured 7000 head of cattle, and recovered several waggons which belonged to one of the massacred parties. Retief was then made Commandant-General, and drew up a form of agreement, by which they renounced their allegiance to England, and bound themselves to obedience and union. Treaties were made with all the native clans between the Orange and the Vaal, but, with the exception of the Barolongs, they were of short duration on both sides.

Then took place the great immigration into Natal, to help their sorely pressed brothers, and the Western plains were left very bare of Boer inhabitants. But with the seizure of Natal by the British, back they poured in large numbers, as has been already noted, and a period of disorder followed. Between them and the Griquas, a half-civilised clan of bastard Hottentots, who had emigrated from the Colony about the beginning of the century, there was much irritation. About this time they were divided into three sections, under Adam and Cornelius Kok and Andries Waterboer, and had entered into treaties with Sir Benjamin D'Urban and consequently, when the Boers began to aggress, considered themselves entitled to British protection. For this aggression they were themselves much to blame, as they thoughtlessly squandered away their lands for the merest trifle, without thinking of the consequences. In 1845, Sir Peregrine Maitland sent a small force of soldiers to settle disputes. They found the two parties drawn up on either side of a wide plain, harmlessly firing at each other. The


Griquas, thus unexpectedly reinforced, took courage and advanced to attack the Boers, who fled panic-stricken before the British dragoons. Most of them submitted the same evening. A British resident, with a few soldiers, was placed at Bloemfontein, and his authority was held to be supreme over all parties—Boers, Griquas, Basutos, etc. This officer, being little better than a tulchan governor, very soon found himself too weak to quell the dissensions between the Boers and the natives. It came to be either annexation or abandonment, and Sir Harry Smith, after settling Natal, summarily proclaimed the whole country, between the Orange and the Vaal, British. This act drove into rebellion the party among the Boers who hated English interference and English rule. It was headed by Pretorius, and having driven the British resident from Bloemfontein, established a Government of its own. After fighting a stiff engagement at Boomplaats, Sir Harry reasserted British authority. The more bitterly hostile of the rebels fled with Pretorius across the Vaal; the rest submitted. A Lieutenant Governor was appointed, and a Legislative Council elected. The former was to maintain the government of the native chiefs over their people, and not to interfere except as arbitrator in cases of dispute regarding boundaries, robberies, and reprisals.

But Moshesh, chief of the Basutos, was difficult to deal with. His tribe, although much cut up in the late tribal wars, had anciently occupied not only what is now Basutoland, but also a large portion of the eastern division of the Orange Free State. By 1852 he had greatly recovered his old power. Disputes with the Boers about boundaries led to stock-lifting on a large scale, and this brought him in that year into collision with a British force under General Cathcart. By him a demand was made for 10,000 head of cattle and 1000 horses, to be delivered in three days' time.

The chief tried to parley, dwelling with much eloquence on the desirability of peace. "Peace," said he, "is like the rain from heaven, which nourishes the land and makes the corn grow; but war is the hot wind, which dries up the earth and blasts the fruit of the soil." Still, on the appointed day only 3500 head of cattle were sent in, and it was not till after hard fighting, in which the British force gained a doubtful success, that he was reduced to submission. But it was now evident that the Sovereignty, as this territory was then called, could not be held without a large force to keep order on its borders. This the British Government was not prepared to maintain, and therefore, in 1854, gave it up to the Boers. The Convention at which this was agreed upon, guaranteed the future independence of the country, disclaimed any treaty with the chiefs dwelling north of the Orange River, with the exception of Adam Kok, and made stipulations for the suppression of crime, the maintenance of the peace, and against the holding of slaves. The people then elected a president and an Assembly of twenty-four members. For several years they were forced to wage constant hostilities with the Basutos, who were at length so hard pressed, that they appealed for British protection, which, contrary to the terms of the treaty, was granted them. Thus again the Boer and Briton came into collision, owing to the vacillating policy which the latter has too often adopted towards both Boer and Black.

On the western side of the Republic there were constant quarrels between the Boers and the Griquas. Adam Kok soon found himself without either land or power, and in his extremity received a location between Natal and the Cape frontier, since known as Griqualand East.

There still remained Nicholas Waterboer, who stoutly proclaimed his right to a certain territory, which, according to him, had not been included in the transfer of land by



Adam Kok to the Boers, but belonged to him. The dispute would probably have been decided by the Boers simply doing as they listed; but it so happened that this piece of wilderness was found to be full of enormous wealth. Diamonds were discovered on it, and this petty dispute became the political question of the day. Thousands of diggers, of all classes and nationalities, rushed thither. Waterboer applied to be received under British protection, and in 1871 it was proclaimed British under the title of Griqualand West. A decade later it was annexed to the Cape Colony. Such action had nearly brought us into a serious wrangle with the Free State, who held that it had been cheated. We made a plausible case, and it is not easy saying which is which, when on either side might only seems to be right. But having secured such a prize, we could well allow our conscience to be a little pricked, and therefore made the Boers a present of £90,000, which acted as a salve. Although the Diamond Fields proved an immensely profitable acquisition, we have through them hatched for ourselves and the Boers endless native troubles, for hitherto the natives flocked in thousands, and having obtained large supplies of guns and ammunition, have thereby nurtured that restless, rebellious spirit which has occasionally broken out in war and devastation.

The Boers, who had originally penetrated beyond the Vaal, and who, as we have already seen, inflicted a great defeat on Moselekatze, did not rest until they had compelled the old Lion of the North to retire to the Zambesi, whence he never returned. After the Battle of Boomplaats in 1848, they received a large accession to their numbers, under Pretorius, who, although there was a reward of £2000 set on his head, was at once appointed Commandant-General. In 1852 he succeeded in concluding a treaty with Great Britain, known as the Sand River Convention, by

which the Transvaal, or, as the Boers term it, the South African Republic, was declared independent. The first clause guaranteed the right to govern themselves, the third disclaimed alliance on the part of Britain with the natives north of the Vaal, the fourth prohibited slavery, the others concerned trade, mutual delivery of criminals to justice, etc.

Old Pretorius, after paying a visit to Natal to open up trade between it and the Transvaal, died the following year, 1853. The excessive exertions of mind and body, which he had long put forth on behalf of his fellow emigrants, was the cause of death. For a month he lay upon his couch—a hero still in the midst of suffering. Feeling that his end was near, he put all the papers relative to the government in order, and then sent for the commandants, field-cornets, and other influential men, to hear his last advice. He entreated them to preserve a cordial union among themselves after his death, and not to let party strife or ambition find a place amongst them. He recommended them to give heed to the exhortations of the minister, and to promote morality and civilisation by every means in their power. Afterwards several native chiefs were admitted to see him. They had heard of his illness, and had come to pay their respects. The relatives of the dying man were much moved on seeing these heathens exhibit extreme grief, as they knelt successively and kissed his hand. To them he had appeared as a preserver of order in the land—as a gracious and humane master. Pretorius devoted his remaining hours to praise and prayer. He expressed perfect resignation to the will of the Almighty, and satisfaction at the prospect of being speedily transferred to a region where trouble and sorrow are unknown. Then, having committed his soul to his Saviour, he calmly and quietly breathed his last. His son succeeded him as president.

In their treatment of the various fragments of tribes, amongst whom they dwelt, they followed the old Dutch methods. The laws against vagrancy and in favour of serfdom up to a certain age, were put in force, and in spite of the convention, something very like slavery was often practised. Notwithstanding, they were regarded by the miserable aborigines as deliverers from the horrid tyranny of chiefs like Moselekatze. By and by, however, troubles arose with a portion, who would steal the Boers' cattle, or even murder a European, and a commando was sent to pursue the evildoers, when the children of the slain were carried off.

They were very chary about holding intercourse with the outer world, and looked with suspicion upon the various attempts made by hunters, travellers, missionaries, and traders, to penetrate into the interior. They feared the intervention of the English on the one hand, and the arming of the natives on the other, if people were allowed to rove amongst them. They therefore, Chinese-like, shut their country against all such, and when a commando moved against the Baquena, among whom Livingstone had been for some time staying, the store of the great traveller was broken into, and its contents destroyed. The Baquena were terribly cut up. Such a tyrannical, selfish mode of acting appears very invidious in the light of the great project of Livingstone, namely, to open up Africa to civilisation, by means of commerce and missions.

There is one tragedy illustrating the extreme side of the Boer method of quelling the native, which approaches barbarism. Happily this is the only one on record, and there were certain exonerating circumstances which speak a little for the perpetrators. The cause of it, in the first instance, was the conduct of one named Potgieter, brother of the famous commander. He was a rough borderer, not above an occasional raid, when he robbed the natives of all they

possessed, seized their children, and bartered them to the villanous slave dealers from Delagoa Bay. Once, while on a hunting expedition in order to collect ivory and ostrich feathers, he was passing in the neighbourhood of a tribe under the chief Makapan, who had suffered from his depredations. They took revenge by murdering him and his companions, including some women and children. Potgieter was pinned to the ground and skinned alive. The families of some other emigrants, who had gone to Makapan to barter corn, were also murdered.

A commando, under M. W. Pretorius, was sent to take revenge on the murderers. They found horrible traces of the murder of their friends, which only confirmed them in their resolution to take fearful vengeance. No allowance was made for the provocation the natives had received. Makapan retired into some great caves, which are found in the sandstone cliffs of that district. They are said to be 2000 feet long, and from 300 to 500 wide. Here there was no getting at them, so the Boers resolved to blast the rock and crush them. This plan failed, and then the effect of starvation was tried. Patrols kept watch day and night, and shot down any of the enemy who showed themselves. After eight days' trial, little progress had been made, and the plan of choking was then adopted. Fifty span of oxen, and about 300 allied natives, were employed at this hellish work, and many loads of stone and trees were brought up and thrown into the openings of the caves. At length the pangs of thirst forced many of the poor wretches out, to meet death, and the unbearable stench told of what was going on within. So shocking had the state of affairs become at the end of three weeks, that the commando were forced to retire. They had killed nearly 1000, besides the far greater number that must have died inside. This horrifying incident remains a dark blot in Boer history.

For about fifteen years after the declaration of independence, the Transvaal was the arena of internal strife between factions, who each wished to set up its own government. At one time it contained several kingdoms within itself. The return in 1863 of M. W. Pretorius, who had been elected President of the Free State in 1859, gave it for a time a more settled character. Subsequently there arose much contention regarding boundaries, which resulted in his dethronement by the Volksraad. His successor, Thomas Burgers, was the nominee of the party of more enlightened views. That party had been gradually gaining ground. The discovery of diamonds, and the opening of the gold-diggings at Leydenburg, had brought a rush of people, of all classes and occupations, into the country. These lie on opposite sides of the Republic, and the road between them passes through the heart of it. Men, however slow, must move with the times, and so the President and his Volksraad bethought themselves of high projects. Railways, bridges, roads, telegraphs were forthwith to be made, and a great loan raised for the purpose of defraying the cost. But it all came to nothing. It was too energetic, too hurried a step, for a country yet crippled by dull ideas and small finances. Not a fourth of the loan was subscribed, and the materials for the railway between Delagoa and Pretoria, which would have proved such a forward step in carrying civilisation into the interior, were left to waste on the shores of the Bay. Worse still, the State got involved in a war with Secoecoeni, the powerful chief of the Bapedi, whose territory the Boers claimed had been made over to them by the Swazies for 100 head of cattle. A fine little transaction, whose history, like all those of native concessions, and of Boer absorptions of territory, had better not be further touched! A large commando marched up, attacked a mountain stronghold, and

then suddenly lost heart, turned round, and scrambled back to Pretoria in something like panic. A number of volunteers from the Diamond Fields were then engaged, who, according to Aylward, fought and spread much, but these were not the men to save the Republic. Nor could the State that was reduced to such an extremity be fit long to remain independent. In 1877 it was quietly annexed, and a British force, under Garnet Wolseley, soon crushed the rebellious Secocoeni. After the Boer War of 1880-81, in which the Transvaalers displayed such splendid courage, the Republic regained self-government. Since then there have been disturbances with the Bechuanas on the north-west frontier, where the so-called Republic of Stellaland and Goshen has sprung into existence. The troubles to which the action of the freebooters, as these marauding pioneers of civilisation have been designated, have given rise, has necessitated the sending of a British force—the Bechuana-land Expeditionary Force—to uphold native rights, and establish order among a predatory, lawless band of Boer and European adventurers. The expansion of the Transvaal in this direction has received a check, and a British Protectorate has been established over the whole of Bechuanaland. On the east, the Boers have penetrated into Zululand, and founded the Republic of Eugenia, and have had their proceedings ratified to a certain extent by the Governor of Natal, whose inhabitants cannot view such a development of Boerdom without apprehension of being completely hemmed in.

Such a frontier as that which civilisation has reached in South Africa can never be stationary, however it may be defined in treaties. The past will repeat itself to a certain extent—encroachments, concessions, theft, contest—but the most warlike of the tribes having been subdued, it will

therefore be minus the tragic, and if, instead of the heroic, there appear the more peaceful virtues of settled civilised life, history may be less stirring, but still as attractive in its record of the triumphs of peace.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AFRICANDER BOND AND THE EMPIRE LEAGUE.



THE last twenty years have witnessed many commotions in South Africa. The discovery of diamonds and gold, the inrush of eager fortune-seekers, the Zulu and Boer Wars, the Bechuanaland Expedition, great proposals and debates in Parliament, have arrested the attention of the whole civilised world. Much more so that of the inhabitants of the land. The Boer mind, previously excited but at rare intervals, has during this period been violently agitated. The result has been, among other things, the *Africander Bond*. Wonderful, what transformations may take place! The mud on the road there, under the action of wind and sun, may in a few hours be floating as dust above the clouds! And here phlegmatic, conservative Boerdom,—under whose surface there lies a powerful, volcanic nature, however,—transformed into an embittered, threatening multitude! Still, this is but another illustration of the principle of reaction. The Boer had largely neglected his political function. He had been cheated by unscrupulous traders; he had often been jeered at by his English fellow-colonists, because of his uncouthness and backwardness—all which he bore with Boer-like apathy. But when the political and commercial activities of late years had sharpened his wits, and he, who had well-nigh forgotten the differences which his kindred had formerly had with the

them in a form which the ages may mark. It has, as its accompaniment, a certain enthusiasm which adds to the the sentiment of the world! It has touched the imagination, the rather sluggish Boer imagination, and set it a dreaming of what shall be, if fancy becomes reality. It has associated with the mountains and dales of the Cape, where the rural population have their homes, a fervid patriotism, which, with some skill of fancy, carries us back to those eras in history, where revolutions were hatched, and tyrants dethroned. It is a great time when patriotism, even when it is but spurious excitement, is breathed from hill and dale and sky. There is the glowing youth with flashing eye, the wild inspired mood, the rush of moving minds, the vague seeking to do something startling and chivalrous! Even if there is a ridiculous element in all this stir, 'tis something unusual, and brings back to memory those winter evenings of early boyhood, when we used to read Thaddeus of Warsaw.

It has practical effect, too,—setting many a thinking, who were well-nigh dead to thought, so that a Boer, from having some general notions about cattle, ostriches, wine-making, has advanced to the point where he has certain definite thoughts and aims regarding the affairs of the community. You will hear him assert with quite a knowing look, that the interests of the farmer should not be sacrificed to those of the merchant; that Africa should not be a hunting-ground of fortune-seekers, to the neglect and loss of its fixed inhabitants; that schools should be founded and encouraged; and that the language (Dutch) spoken by the majority should have its proper place in the courts of the land; that the farming population should take interest in political affairs, and exercise their due influence at elections.

These are all branches of the stem—the “nationaliteits gevoel”—and to put life and strength into both stem and

branches, till they become a full-grown tree, has been the striving of the Africander Bond since its formation, six years ago. It has held numerous meetings—local, provincial, central,—and speechified itself hoarse. It has written lamentations and sung psalms, according as its temper was desponding or jubilant. It extended sympathy to the downtrodden Boers, when doing battle against the accursed English. It has published a programme of principles, in which it declares, with rebellious boldness, that it aims at a united South Africa, under its own flag. Its stump orators have declaimed against the use of the English language, which the educated youths of the land have begun to speak instead of the Dutch patois. It has largely influenced the last elections, by which a majority of Africander members of Parliament have been returned.

But while the Bond has earned for itself a place as a servicable institution in the land, it has not succeeded in commending itself to the more intelligent Africanders. It is supported by the inculcation of narrow views, and race hatred is fanned in the ratio that ignorant pretension is manifested. Were the chief result improvement in agriculture, one could forgive an occasional vagary, but in spite of stump speeches and magniloquent projects, the fields are no better cultivated, and everything is in a miserably languid state. The best test for this, and all such bonds, is the character of results. Let theorising alone, and study the *cui bono*, and things will right themselves.

For the present the movement, as tending to the formation of a nation, is premature. There is much exaggeration and excitement, and the true materials—comprehension of interest, and unity of language, religion, and disposition—are not there. It is in the interests of the Boers that these nation-manufacturers stand forth with their proposal of salvation. Of course they include all, who will give

them countenance, of whatever profession or nationality, but they must have the Dutch Boer notions. But in Cape Colony, to restrict ourselves to it, although the whole of South Africa is meant to be embraced by the Bond, there are English, Dutch, Kaffirs, Hottentots, all with manifold interests—cultivators of the soil, shopkeepers, merchants, labourers,—and to form a nation in the interests of only one of these, or in the interests of all, only so far as they accept Boer dictation, is manifestly an outrage on the others.

Of course, a nation that is to be manufactured, must have a definite language, if possible, of its own make, because a number of individuals that had produced a language of their own would be entitled to look upon themselves as a new people. This, the Boers assert, with an air of solemn importance, they have already developed. Their miserable organ "*De Patriot*," a few doggerel verses published by some daffing young Boer, and a book on unfulfilled prophecy by one of their "*predikants*," are considered the basis of a literature, that will make their tongue live! It has already been systematised in a grammar, but even with some Chaucer to mould it, it would not reach the stage of a full-grown language within the next 300 years. All languages have grown out of dialects, but not in a day. The alternative is the Dutch of Holland, which at least is not English, and would do in the case where as much unlikeness as possible to everything English is a desideratum. In making a distinct nation, everything that marks a difference is a godsend. But this will not suit those, who will have nothing to do either with good or bad Dutch, but desire to speak a language that will not shut them out from the rest of the world. Here is another rock upon which the proposal is likely to be shattered, unless both parties agree to have a polyglot nation, but then, in the opinion of the new

manufacturers one definite language is essential—language and nation are one.

Once more must the great thought do penance. In the formation of a state, what about religion and character? Must there not be some agreement in both? We are not speaking of a nation made by force of arms, in which only the first requisite need be cared for. We are speaking of an attempt from certain materials to manufacture one, and are considering the things that must be reckoned with, if it is to be a success. The Boers, of course, are all of one persuasion and disposition, but then the non-Boers, whom you must either absorb, or kill off, or transport? Can you by any possible amount of crushing or moulding of Hottentot, Kaffir, Celtic, or Saxon character; High Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, pagan views, get a one-disposed people? Religion and disposition are things that must be reckoned with, for they govern thought so much. We live in days of multiplicity of creeds now, and nations are made by means of improved artillery mostly; in bygone days, when nations grew, they had at least the three elements we have mentioned—which fact, sirs, with your prosing about “nationaal-gevoel,” you have forgotten. In the way of musket and artillery we have no such arguments, but then you will have an Empire League in your midst to smash.

Its opponent, the Empire League, represents another idea, that of attachment to the present system of what might be called, affiliated nationality; which is the case where the land is regarded as an appendage of an old parent state. It was started after the parliamentary elections of 1883 had shown the strength of the anti-English party, as represented by the Bond. Its headquarters are in Cape Town, with branches over a large part of the Colony. Its members, in contrast to those of its rival, include the more influential and intelligent colonists, especially in the large

towns. Between them there is much ill feeling and evil speaking. Like most rival associations, they are one-sided in the maintenance of their principles, and a man of impartial mind will care to belong to neither. There is no doubt that the imperial connection is both very necessary and very beneficial for South Africa, notwithstanding the fact that a great writer, Mr. Froude, has lately proclaimed, that it must bear the blame of all the misfortunes that have come upon the land. By him the Boers are set forth as model rulers; the English as a set of blunderers from beginning to end. On the contrary, in regard to internal government, it is certain, that the English have raised the Colony, during their connection with it, to a high grade of advancement. Compare it now with what it was under Dutch rule. Compare Cape Colony or Natal, with their railways, telegraphs, bridges, with the Dutch states, still in this respect dominated by the dull Dopper spirit. Compare the freer, more cultured condition of society in the former, with the narrow prejudices, too frequently found swaying opinion in the latter. Compare the Eastern with the Western Province of the Cape. Leave the Dutch alone, and let them govern after our failure, says Mr. Froude. Yet it is a fact, that the Cape has advanced as much during the last sixty years, as any European country. And certainly, there is more hope of as rapid progress in the future, if it remains in touch with the enterprise and inexhaustible resources of a mighty empire, than if guided by a few Africander patriots, with neither credit nor prestige to recommend them to the world. Viewing the fruits of a long beneficent rule, such as the English, on the whole, has been, a man will hesitate before he concludes, that it has been a mistake, although mistakes have been committed.

In regard to external policy, the Boer is definite—Clear

the blacks away, or let them crouch before the white man. Stand no parleying, and drive out of your head any notion of native rights. The English, owing to ignorance, officialism, and the vagaries of party, have often been vacillating and inconsequent. They have often disgusted the Boer and irritated the black. But, although the Boer has the advantage of dogged firmness, is there not a doubt in a kindly heart, that firmness may be a cold, cruel thing, without the warm throbbing of humanity in it? There is such a thing as the firmness of a butcher, when he is going to slaughter a sheep, and the firmness of a father, when he is going wisely to handle a child. It is melancholy to think of all the woe, that the inferior races of the earth have suffered, during so many generations, from that heartless firmness, which has dealt so many blows, but wiped away so few tears!

The English with their missionary societies, peace societies, cruelty to animals societies, and general spirit of philanthropy, have better known how to show consideration towards a lower race. Say that kindness to a black man is a source of weakness, and entails rebellion and bloodshed; but as much, if not more, follows the merely iron sword of no quarter, except in the attitude of crouching submission. If oceans of blood must be shed in this bloody world, it is better to think that it was not all the work of the sledge-hammer spirit. Looking at the matter, from the standpoint of the black man, who must not be ignored altogether, as writers on this subject seem inclined to do, it is, perhaps, well that the Briton should be a check to the Boer. He is likewise of opinion that it is safer for him to be ruled by a mighty power, who, unlike a merely local one, will be more likely to deal with impartiality and large-heartedness. But it is too much for the Boers, or Mr. Froude, on their behalf, to assume that they have been

successful in their foreign policy, or the British either. They have both of them killed too many poor wretches, and are ever too insecure on their native frontier to justify such an assumption.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BOER INTELLECTUAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE.



THE rapid advance of education has ushered in the morning of a Renaissance in South Africa. The Boer mind has awakened out of its long slumber. The presence of enterprise—political and commercial—and the founding of numerous schools, have wrought a great change in this respect. There has arisen a younger generation of Afrianders, who have received mental inspiration from the great forces that work in the more highly civilised world. The heavy days when their fathers fed their minds exclusively on the Bible, to the neglect of all the humanising influences that healthily effect our nature, are gone. Judging, then, from these younger and better educated specimens, who throng the seats of learning, and are frequently to be met with in the lonely farmhouses, the Boer intellect is solid, but not brilliant; lively on occasion, but seldom witty; capable of enduring great strain, but not very buoyant; not rich in flower, but full of rough strength. It cannot roam over such a wide field of fancy and knowledge as the European. In society, for instance, it contents itself with the exchange of commonplaces, or the narration of incident, in which a tendency to exaggeration is exhibited. This difference one discovers on visiting the Anglo-South African towns—Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Durban—where one comes in contact with people of more active mind, an activity not exclusively generated by commerce, but often derived from the surging of European

intellectual life. Our judgment of the Boer mind cannot be final, however. It is still in a state of development, and in a generation or two may produce individuality, depth, power, genius enough to make them factors of influence on the thought of the world. Of this they are quite confident, since they boast of having the best blood of Europe in their veins—French, Dutch, German, Scotch, Portuguese—and such a combination is a splendid basis for high development. Their fine physique is another ground for this confidence.

Although South Africa cannot as yet lay claim to an indigenous literature or science, it has been the scene of the labours of distinguished scientific men. The splendour of its sky, affording such scope for the study of the heavenly bodies, has attracted to its shores the astronomers Lacaille, Le Vaillant, and Herschel, who here made valuable additions to their science. Philologists, like Bleek and Hahn, have laboured to throw light on the native languages and customs, especially those of the Hottentots and Bushmen. The study of geographical science has been prosecuted with such practical effect by Livingstone, that thousands of miles of the earth's surface have been opened up and mapped out. The well-known name of Colenso recalls his labours in the fields of mathematics and theology. The Pentateuch has passed under review of his critical mind, and has been cut up in the most approved German fashion. According to Welhausen, he has drawn largely on German authors for the materials of his conclusions, and his significance as a theologian consists in his having had the courage to put forth his work on the Pentateuch in the face of the sure opposition, which he would meet from the English religious world. Pringle, the leader of a band of Scotch emigrants, and a friend and correspondent of Walter Scott, was lulled into song by its scenery. Writers like Froude and Trollope

have penned their holiday experiences, while travelling through it. But apart from the association of these and other great names with the land of the Boers, the day of a distinct South African literature is yet to come. It is poor and unproductive—no one has even composed a passable song, which is one of the first signs of the presence of great literary power. How great is thus the difference between South Africa and America in respect of literature, although both countries were founded about the same time! The difference in character, climate, and environs may account for it; yet there are grand materials here for the formation of a widely varied literature. The heroic,—how mighty, with such a wealth of majestic landscapes, and so much of war in history! The lyric,—how charming with those quiet home scenes in solitary mountain vale, on dreary plain, and under such a mystic sky! There are sad memories of bygone suffering—parting from ancestral land; struggle with savage; hardships of a home in interior wilds, to nurture the dirge or the ballad! Let them only come under the spell of some moulding spirit, who knows how to throw glow and meaning over things. And let the people rouse themselves from merely pondering over Dutch sermons and devotional books of last century, and cease to condemn unopened the works of great minds, as full of unsound teaching. Let them come in contact with thoughts and sentiments, which engender wider judgment and finer taste. The old Puritanic ideas in vogue, which would blot a Shakespeare or a Goethe out of the universe, and think they were doing God service, are very withering.

The religious life of South Africa presents great variety. Christianity, Mohammedanism, and various shades of Paganism, have each a place. Mohammedanism flourishes among the Malays of Cape Town, who are very zealous in

preserving the belief and ceremonies of their Oriental ancestors. Christianity is, of course, represented by a multitude of sects, for distance from old associations seems to be ineffectual in binding up the different fragments of the Christian Church. Of these the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian, or Dutch Reformed, are the most important. The former is divided into two branches—the Church of the Province of South Africa, and the Church of England in South Africa, founded by Bishop Colenzo, who rightly refused to acknowledge the authority of the other South African Bishops, when they sought to depose him for holding heretical views. The first-named is very ritualistic, and consequently very exclusive; but many of its clergy must base their claim to superiority over those of other denominations, more on the so-called right of the Apostolic Succession than on culture. It is strong in the Eastern Province, where the English predominate.

The Dutch Reformed Church may be called the National Church of South Africa, since the Dutch people form by far the majority of the population. Its chief public gathering, the Synod, takes place every three years at Cape Town. The streets of the capital present quite an unusual appearance on this occasion. Country-looking ministers and burly elders, with their wives and families, may be seen clustering in small groups, or strolling leisurely about, viewing, with widely-opened eyes, the busy thoroughfares, so unlike the quiet villages in the interior, whence they have come. A three years' absence from such scenes lends them a novelty in the eyes of a Boer from the dreary wastes of Namaqualand, for instance, which they cannot have for one less accustomed to solitude. He may well rub his eyes more than once to be sure that he is in this world—to him so much associated with the infinite stretch of the great inland plains. They must be a kindly, simple-hearted folk, these

Boers, judging from the hearty, uncereemonious manner of their greetings. Shaggy enough they look, some of them, and round as the globe, but tall and stately as well. At length the sight-seeing and the demonstrative greetings subside, and the worthy brethren settle down in the Great Church in Adderley Street, to the consideration of the ecclesiastical business that has brought them together. Their further proceedings do not need description in Scotland. We know all phases of Presbyterian ecclesiastical life here, especially that which consists in squabbling about theories of Church government, and minute points of doctrine and discipline. Six weeks of discussion brings the Synod safely to the end of its labours—thanks to the presidency of such a moderator as Dr. Andrew Murray, and the leadership of such orators as Dr. Hofmeyr, and Messrs. Neethling, M'Gregor, and Van der Wal, etc. ; and the tired members return to their distant homes, to entertain their neighbours for months with the story of their adventures and experiences in the capital. How they spoke and how they voted, what they saw and how they feasted, and much more in addition, is retailed with a good spice of exaggeration to make it tell better, and told and retold, till the objections of conscience are completely silenced by sheer reiteration.

In most of the parishes the "kerk" is a very sober-looking building. Whilst the people manifest much practical devotion to religion, they are singularly deficient in reverence for art. There are a few, such as that at George Town, which show both in their ancient look, and in the beauty of their surroundings, something of that dignified sweetness, which one often remarks about an old church in England. Two really splendid buildings have lately been erected at Oudtshoorn and Cradock, each costing £30,000. The newer churches of Stellenbosch, Caledon, Riversdale, etc., are also great improvements on the old barns, in respect of style,

accommodation, and beauty ; but, in general, church architecture is still lamentably deficient. As for the churchyards, they are simply shocking. Not only in the interior, but in the old villages near Cape Town, there is uniformly apparent the same sacrilegious untidiness. In the rainy season, they are usually one tangle of weeds ; in the dry months, dusty and desolate beyond description. Sometimes, in the interior, cattle and ostriches are to be found feeding in them ; especially when they belong to a private person, for, since the distance from the village is often very great, there is frequently a churchyard attached to a farm. If it be true, that the state of a people's mind is mirrored in the appearance of their graveyards, how rude must that of the Boer be ; and if this be the case with regard to their religion, may God have pity on their souls !

The manse or "pastory" is usually a picture of comfort and plenty. Some are commodious villas ; others plain, but roomy, thatch-roofed houses. There is generally a fine garden and orchard attached. In manners, hospitality, home-life, and piety, it is the model for the whole community. Want is a stranger within its walls, unlike so many pastors' homes in other lands, for the Dutch ministers are well-paid. There are many salaries of £600 ; a few above this sum ; more of £500 ; while £400 or £450 is a common stipend. He can only be said to be pinched and in need of frequent presents, which he is sure to receive—sometimes an ox, sometimes a sheep, a load of forage, a quantity of provisions—when, like a true Africander, he somewhat overplenishes his manse with prattling bairns—all to be fed, and some to be educated at places far from home. It is very agreeable to mark the signs of refinement and intelligence in many of these manses. The scene around may be savagely, sterilely African ; but there you find the books, the pictures, the conversation of Europe.

The church services are conducted with great dignity and solemnity, in accordance with one of the mottoes of the Church—"Let all things be done decently and in order." Whilst the congregation is assembling, it is customary for the beadle or precentor—the same individual often occupying both posts—to read some chapters of the Bible from a desk in front of the pulpit. The opening services are plainly Presbyterian. The sermon is generally of great length—an hour and a-half is short. Graceful eloquence is neglected for forcible expression. Burns' description fits some of them capitally:—

"Hear how he clears the points of faith,
Wi' rattlin' and wi' thumpin';
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's stampin' and he's jumpin'."

The style is thus hortatory; but a didactic sermon, once a month, on some doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism is required by the law of the Church. Nearly all the ministers manifest remarkable fluency in Dutch, with plenty of thunder and gesture in delivery, which please and edify their reverent listeners. The repeating of the creed and the law is a set part of the morning service. There are also forms for baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burial—the first two being performed in church. In this respect the Dutch Reformed Church is different from the more rigid portion of the Presbyterians of Scotland. It likewise celebrates, by appropriate services, the chief feasts of the Christian Church—Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost. It forms a very instructive contrast to our merely national prejudices in many matters of religion, to find another Presbyterian Church allocating to itself the liberty to bring occasionally to memory the great facts of our Lord's history. Well, for those who will learn from no historical source that is not Presbyterian, it might be serviceable to

take a hint from the distant Cape, that the five Articles of Perth are not so prelatic and heretical but that they may form part of a Church's services as soundly Presbyterian in its constitution as our own.

A large part of the minister's time is spent on horseback, or between the wheels of a Cape cart, performing "Huis Bezoek"—house visitation. As the parishes are very large, and many of the people can therefore but seldom attend service, this is a very necessary duty. Calvinia, for instance, is as large as Palestine; Namaqualand is still larger; while Oudtshoorn, Clanwilliam, Richmond, would form very considerable kingdoms. It is customary for an elder to accompany the minister, and this lends his visit more an official than a familiar character. He is everywhere received with a respect and heartiness which his brethren in Europe might envy in these radical times. When he is a man of knowledge and character, his influence on the people has an excellent educative effect; but their unbounded admiration is in some cases apt to make them the dupes of mere bombast and conceit. There are no specimens of that easy-going stamp of pastor of last century, regarding whom a memorial sent in 1705 to Holland beareth witness, "That his reverence was one of the largest farmers, and busied himself more with his farmwork than with his pulpit; that sometimes he remained on his farm for more than 14 days; and that, although the church had been built at the greatest cost to the congregation, he was often absent on Sunday taking his pleasure in the country, and this even at the time of the Lord's supper. That he was not ashamed to say that, when the Governor and the second officer were out of town, he saw no reason why he should stay and preach for the common folk."

In the religious life of the Boer nature is a moulding factor. Renan has given so much power of impressiveness

to the silent desert, that he finds in the fact that the Semitic peoples lived amid impressive surroundings the explanation of Semitic monotheism. This is too much to assert; but there certainly is ground for believing that residence in such vast desert plains as the Karoo tends to nourish the religious sentiment. The monotony of the landscape,—bare, flat, and in attractive,—relieved by the beauty of the sky,—so warm, deep-blue, and sparkling,—inclines the eye and the mind upward. Again, how powerful is the impression when the might of an African thunderstorm bursts forth, and the heavens seem convulsed by an awe-inspiring power! Or at eve, when sweet peace settles over everything! Thousands of stars glitter in the great dome above, with animated movement and startling brilliance. The desert seems, in the soft darkness, to idealise itself; dim shapes seeming to evolve themselves from the rocks and stones! And such a mystic silence; but then the silence of the universe is the voice of God!

There is something oriental in things which makes the religion of the patriarchs, for example, congenial. We have often been struck with the resemblances to Bible lands in regard to scenery, products, and customs, which South Africa presents. So we are not surprised that the simple Boers talk and think of nature and the affairs of life in a way that leads one back to less scientific times. Hear them speak of the clouds, and you almost imagine them to be gods! Ghosts people the graveyards and eerie places of their neighbourhood. No Kaffir witch doctor could pray for rain more fervently than some Boer patriarch, and the belief in a providence caring for the white man at the expense of the black, is as strong as it ever was in the mind of an ancient Israelite. They are like the ancient Hebrews too, in their continual pious acknowledgment of God's existence and providence. Hence the attention paid to domestic

worship and morality, and the good old conservative type of piety, which frowns on the excesses of mere sensationalism. The contrast between their present and past religious condition is very decided. Driven into the interior by the action of tyrannical governors, and compelled to lead a roving life, the condition of many of the ancient colonists was no higher than that of rude nomads. "It was not uncommon for the Boers of this district" (the interior), so says an old document, "to wait until they had four or five children before they brought them to the church at Stellenbosch or Drakenstein to be christened. And sometimes they waited even longer, when they had no produce, such as butter, or no need of tobacco, tea, sugar, or clothes. But breeches and shoes, they wore not at all."

They are very credulous. If they had been Roman Catholics, there would have been no end of cases in which the Virgin and the saints would have appeared to them. As it is, we have met individuals who related to us, as sober verities, appearances of spirits, or other things uncanny, with which they had been tormented. Till lately Boerland was the paradise of quacks of all kinds. There is the water doctor—some old sailor with cunning enough to fabricate some theory about the finding of water, which is such a necessity in a dry land, and with resource enough to make all kinds of excuses on occasion. He starts with a lucky hit. He has told a farmer that he will find water at a certain spot, and somehow he finds it. His fame spreads—he puts on spectacles, long hat, and frockcoat, looks wise, becomes more daring in his predictions—money flows in, and, after he has risked it as long as he dare in one place, departs in search of new victims. Then there is the herb doctor,—the quack who deals in medicinal herbs,—filling great bottles with his decoctions, and curing all diseases with the same medicine. Gil Blas, whose prescrip-

tion, in all cases, was bleeding, and the drinking of warm water, could not have practised better or killed more—the faith of a Boer in plenty of big bottles cannot be shaken ! Then there is the sympathy doctor, who professes to cure by trying to take over the mental condition of the patient on his own mind, and thereby relieving the body. He will cure your broken leg for you by sympathy, if you pay him properly. Knowing human nature, he mingles religion with his quackery, and accordingly flourishes among a simple, religious people.

The great event of Boer religious life is the celebration of "Nachtnaal," four times a year. Many, having come from far, have to pitch tents and live a camp life for the time being. At Oudtshoorn, for example, one may see, three or four days preceding the communion Sunday, numbers of ox-waggons or carts arriving on the ground reserved for the camp, near the church. These covered-in ox-waggons, the rustic Pulman car of South Africa, which contain beds and other conveniences, have served as moving dwelling-houses during the time occupied by the journey. Arrival follows arrival, and the ground is soon dotted with large tents. Near each blazes a fire, well supplied with cooking utensils, and surrounded by coloured servants, busy cooking. By night these fires have a picturesque effect from a distance, dimly discovering the crowds of moving men and women among the numerous tents, and reminding one of a large military encampment. A good deal of business is done during the day, when the people are not engaged attending service, except of course on Sunday. During service, which is often from four to five hours in length, it is not unusual for members to go out, have a smoke and chat, and then return to their devotions with all the more zest after the interval. Many of the people embrace the opportunity of visiting the

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of provisions for the next three or six months, in exchange for the produce which they have brought. In the evening they may be seen after service, moving about the camp, greeting each other, engaging in friendly conversation, or discussing the agricultural prospects and the latest lawsuit (for the Boers are very litigious), with the noise and movement of a fair. In some tents family worship is being held, of which the singing of the Dutch Psalms forms a part,—which mingling of the sacred and secular has no very melodious effect on the ear of the listener. In old days the scene during the communion “occasions” in some parts of Scotland, as noticed by Dean Ramsay, and in “The Annals of the Parish,” must have had many points of resemblance to that of the South African “Nachtmal,” and there are one or two stanzas of Burns’ “Holy Fair” that may be taken as descriptive of such a camp assembly of the Boer population.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE COLOURED MAN.



It was the practice of the British Government, after it took possession of the Cape, to grant to mission societies a piece of land, where they could gather a number of the natives and teach them the Christian religion. Hence arose throughout the colony a number of mission villages. Gnadenthal, Bethelsdorp, Pacaltsdorp were among the first of these. They were an eyesore to the farmers, who charged them with harbouring a number of idlers, and thus encouraging laziness. Others looked upon them as asylums for those of the Hottentots, who were illtreated by their masters. Probably they might be both condemned because of the one, and praised because of the other. Doubtless, where the industrial was joined with the educational and religious, they were sources of lasting good. They are interesting as the beginnings of those missionary labours in South Africa, which have now assumed such vast dimensions. One of them, Pacaltsdorp, we favoured with a visit. It is a contrast to turn from the pages of history to such a place. In the former we see the soldier and the trader carrying civilisation onward amid fierce struggle; through the latter, the missionary, bearing the palm of peace and using only persuasive means. There is a great difference between the two agents—the difference between material and moral force. Here the tramp of battalions, the roar of artillery, the death wound and the dying moan—there the appeal to

conscience, reason, and heart! We think of 1800 years ago—Roman soldier and Christian apostle roaming over the world; only the soldier is Christian too, now. And the one could not do without the other. It is a mistake to hold that the missionary or the soldier alone is to civilise the world. Without the moral truths inculcated by the former, the revolution wrought by the latter would not be reformation in the highest sense; without the majesty of power, the strength of government represented by the latter, the effect of the former on mind and character would lack completeness. The Kaffir must be moulded by law, as well as enlightened by grace. It is not in the power of the missionary; it is none of his business to teach the forms of government. And the emblems of power are a necessary schoolmaster for the savage, who only knows to lend authority to the strong. We are not the apologist of selfish policy, but hold that in the civilisation of the world the State has its function as well as the Church. The two go together—an argument for a State Church, you will perceive, which is at least new!

For a long time the soldier had it all his own way. The Dutch for long excluded missionaries from their dominion at the Cape. A Moravian, Schmidt, was allowed to labour a short time among the Hottentots about the middle of last century. But both the authorities and the burghers so harassed him by their opposition, that he lost heart and returned to Europe. He had established a station and made a few converts, however,—one of whom, an old woman, still lived to welcome, half-a-century later, three missionaries of the same society, who had obtained permission to recommence mission work, and founded a station at the same spot. Following the Moravians came the London Missionary Society, in 1799, and during the first quarter of the present century the Glasgow, Wesleyan, Rhenish,

Paris, and Berlin Societies planted stations in and beyond the colony. Since then the number of distinct mission agencies has increased to thirteen, and the whole of Southern Africa may be said to be netted over with their stations. Remarkable success has resulted from the labours of some of these; especially of the Rhenish society, among the Namaquas and Damaras, of the French among the Basutos, of the Scotch Presbyterians in Kaffraria, and of the London Missionaries among the Bechuanas. The heads of these societies in South Africa—Herr Krönlein, M. Colliard, Dr. Stuart, and Mr. MacKenzie—we have had the pleasure of meeting. The first named is known from his magnificent labours in translating the Bible into the Namaqua language, which is awaiting the sanction of his society before being published,—the last, from his having lately been Her Majesty's Commissioner for Bechuanaland, and from his book, "Ten Years North of the Orange River." Both are fine, burly men, with much decision of character, power of intellect, and enthusiasm for work. M. Colliard is a man of intense earnestness, who has endured much for the cause he has at heart. His latest act of devotion was the planting of a new station on the Zambesi, which he directs himself. Dr. Stuart has perhaps the most onerous post of all. He presides over Lovedale, which has a large number of departments, so that the heart, head, and hand of the Kaffir are alike trained.

The mention of these leaders of the present recalls those of the past, men who have handed down to posterity an imperishable name—Van der Kemp, Philip, Livingstone, and Moffat. Van der Kemp is a strange figure. First, a fast young Dutch officer, then a doctor of medicine and learned author, and then, at an advanced age, the agent of the London Missionary Society among the Hottentots. He had experienced a change of life on crossing a river, when

the boat capsized, and his wife and children were drowned before his eyes. His self-sacrificing zeal as a missionary was extraordinary, but too theoretical not to be somewhat visionary. He first attempted to convert the Kaffirs, and resided some time with the chief Gaika; but made no progress. He then gathered a number of Hottentots around him, first at a place called Graaf Reynet, and afterwards at Bethelsdorp, a piece of land which he had obtained from the Government. Lichtenstein describes an interview which he here had with him. He represents him as gaunt of form and shabbily clad, devotional almost to imbecility, and like some ancient Antonius in his severe views of life. But an enthusiasm fired his withered frame, which made all bow in respect before him. This led him so far astray, however, that he descended to marry a Hottentot girl—a step which he afterwards regretted. He came in constant collision with the authorities, who desired to endue his Hottentots with the spirit of labour, whilst he was inclined to keep them independent, and occupy their minds in religious exercises. At any rate, the Aborigines found in him a strenuous advocate. He was worthily succeeded in this respect by Dr. Philip, who was sent out by the Society to superintend its missions for five years. He made several journeys throughout the country, and published the result of his researches into the condition of the Hottentots and Bushmen in a volume, which excited much sympathetic interest in England, and violent opposition in South Africa. The result was the freeing of these bondsmen from aggressive laws, and their amelioration in civilisation. His name is therefore intertwined in South African history with justice and liberty. The Boers, who are patriarchal in their treatment of the natives, looked upon him as a dangerous enthusiast.

On Livingstone and Moffat, it is needless to expatiate.

Every child knows something about them, especially of the former, whose mighty, romantic career has excited such an interest in Southern Africa, the wide world over. How we read with admiration of the hardy, untiring lad, at work in the factory at Blantyre, with his Latin grammar close at hand; of the struggles of his college career; of his heroic purpose, showing such unselfish enthusiasm and iron will; of his quiet efforts to enlighten and elevate and heal a tribe of poor savages; of his vast journeys and great discoveries; of his noble, though sad death! When we stand in the capital of his native land, and gaze on his monument, we think by contrast of the solitary plains of Bechuanaland and the inner reaches of the Kalahari, far more eloquent of his greatness than that little figure in bronze, dwarfed by the spire that guards that of the great novelist, whose merits in another sphere show nothing grander than those of Livingstone in his! Yet his is a greatness that can afford to be without grandeur of statue, when it is imprinted on every stone, mountain, and desert of Africa's surface for thousands of miles!

It is strange that colonists so often look hostilely on missions. By them the Christian native is suspected and despised. Christianity, or at any rate, the missionary, only spoils the raw Kaffir, lending him all kinds of airs, disinclining him to work, making him clever at stealing! This is a heavy charge. It expresses at least the fact that missions are not popular. While it is certain that there are bad native Christians, just as there are bad European Christians, and while the mere Christian gloss is, in the case of the former, particularly superficial, much of the charge has the prejudice of the accuser as its foundation,—a prejudice which will make no allowance for the circumstances of missions, but have perfection or nothing. Where missionaries act stupidly towards the Kaffir, they have a right to complain; but we

have met many, whose method of treatment was so excellent, that we could not agree to condemn them wholesale. It all depends upon your standpoint. It is certain, however, that missionaries cannot lay enough stress on the practical effect of religion. Mere evangelising is not sufficient, and a full organisation for developing him morally, mentally, and mechanically, with much patience, is necessary.

In prosecuting their work, the missionaries have many difficulties to contend with. Politicians may obstruct or favour them, according as their wisdom sees fit. Their success used to depend on the favour of the chiefs, but their authority being checked by the British Government, they cannot do so much to thwart them now. Then there is his reverence, the witch-doctor. Like Barjesus, who confronted Paul at Paphos, he tries to undermine their influence. He has the prestige of tradition and ancient custom to fall back on. He can make rain, find lost cattle, cause the warriors of his tribe to be invulnerable, smell out witches, etc., etc.; and when he is not found out, and pitched into the nearest stream, holds the field. A simple declaration of the Gospel, amid such a superstitious people—how much less imposing! And the superstition that keeps up such imposters—what a mist for the sun of righteousness to pierce through! The Kaffirs, for instance, before crossing a stream, will throw in a stone, to save them from the host of goblins and sprites in whom they believe. Such beliefs are very hard to uproot. Again, low habits, such as polygamy, are not easily forsaken. A revolution must come first. And then the strangeness of the sublime ideas presented to the Kaffir mind are something for him at first to shake his head and smile at. He, whose notion is of the simple concrete, cannot be easily attracted by the abstract. It is quite amusing to read M. Casalis' story about the incredulity of the Basutos, as to whether the paper could speak or not! But he has a reli-

gion after a fashion—the notion of a Supreme Being, and the worship of his ancestors, especially the great chiefs; he is not dull, and is inclined to be docile. Such traits go a little way in bringing up the scale on the other side; but without enthusiastic devotion to the cause and reliance on the power of Providence, let no one put his hand to this work. Instead of the poor intellects and little characters, it needs the strongest men of the Christian Church.

We have faith in the Divine mission of Christianity to regenerate the world, because it is adapted to human needs. Be thankful for what has been done, and compare what was with what is, and the gain will appear marvellous. All great transformations are, to some extent, accompanied by discouraging events. Here we have war and convulsion and partial failure, and yet the natives are increasing, and Christian civilisation is spreading. We have met some fine specimens of Christian life and intelligence. Whether the European forms are there, matters little, if the universal Christian spirit is present. So shall we be able to say some day, whatever vicissitudes intervene, in the words of the apostate Emperor, Julian—"At length hast thou conquered, O Galilee!"

CHAPTER XX.

PAST AND PRESENT.



HIS century has been a memorable one for South Africa. Unlike the 150 years preceding it, when the Cape languished under the rule of the Dutch East India Company, it has been marked by the stir of progress, and the excitement of great events. As in Europe, so in South Africa, its dawn was ushered in amid the tramp of battalions and the strife of contending hosts. The more important events, which follow, are—the immigration of about 5000 British colonists in 1820, and the forming of the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony; the struggle with a high-handed Governor, Lord C. Somerset, for a free press—terminated successfully in 1828; the generous legislation on behalf of the Hottentots and slaves; the founding of the South African College at Cape Town, and the gradual extension of education; the great increase of missionary activity; the building of lighthouses, and the improvement of harbours and roads; the colonisation of Natal, the Free State, and the Transvaal by the Trek-Boers; the construction of great passes over the mountains; the agitation against making the Cape a convict station; the acquirement of self-government in 1853; the opening of the copper mines in Namaqualand; the discovery of diamonds at a time of great commercial depression, and the consequent rush of diggers in 1869, and revival of trade; the commencement in 1873 of railway construction, bridge-building, and tele-

graph extension on a large scale. Most of these can be traced to British energy, the dissatisfied Boers keeping aloof in old-fashioned ease in the interior solitudes. Greater advances could have been made, had not native wars and disagreements with the Boers acted as obstacles. Yet in their own way, the Boers have done much to open up Africa. They have, after a certain fashion, been the pioneers, making the track along which a higher civilisation was to follow.

During the last few years, South Africa has been passing through a period of sifting. Since the excitement of the Boer and Zulu Wars, the trade of the country has been in a state of exhaustion. Hence the numerous bankruptcies since 1880 (it is considered rather a fashionable thing to fail in South Africa, especially when one can profitably do so), and the many departures of young English colonists to Australia. It is, therefore, very agreeable to learn from the speech of the Premier, Sir Thomas Sprigg, delivered at Worcester, the other day, that the commercial prospect is becoming brighter. During the last eighteen months, the country and the world at large have been occasionally excited by the rumours of coming harvest. Gold has been discovered, and digging prosecuted. Hitherto the Diamond Fields were the great hive for fortune-seekers. It is reckoned that, during the twenty years they have been worked, from four to five tons' weight have been found, of the value of forty millions of pounds. Kimberley has risen to be a town of 30,000 inhabitants, and the amount paid lately to shareholders by dividend-paying companies, for a period of six months, was over £250,000. The new hunting-grounds, of which so many fairy tales have been circulated, are in the north-east of the Transvaal, and part of Swaziland, in the heart of the Transvaal, and at Knysna, on the south-east coast of the Cape Colony. The first are known as De

Kaap Goldfields. The Drakensbergen here begin to slope off in a succession of terraces to the lower range of the Lebombo, about 120 miles from Delagoa Bay. Through the middle of the auriferous tract flows, in a picturesque valley, the Kaap River.

After it was certain that gold was to be found, the Transvaal Government, in 1885, declared the Government ground a public goldfield. Messrs. Barber then discovered the Umconchwa reef, and formed the township of Barberton. Within a distance of about fifteen miles, several other reefs have since been discovered—the richest being the Sheba, and near it, Bray's Golden Quarry, belonging to two companies, respectively bearing these names. From the latter, between 600 and 700 tons quartz have been taken, yielding 8 ounces per ton. Running parallel with the former, but about half-a mile distant, is a piece of ground, known as Thomas', the property of two Cornish miners of that name. While the two brothers were prospecting, one of them was taken ill, and sat down at a spot, where he saw something glittering before him. He examined the shining substance, and the result was that they sunk a shaft, which has yielded some of the very richest ore. It is doubtful whether it is a "reef," or only "a chimney," or fissure they have found. The brothers, however, made £200 a-week by crushing the quartz with a "dolly," the yield giving the magnificent return of from 25 to 100 ounces per ton. Some time ago they parted with their property for the sum of £60,000 cash, which was paid them by a syndicate of Cape, Natal, and English capitalists. Altogether there are over a dozen crushing mills at work on the fields, but, for the extent of operations, the number is small and inadequate. When the means of transport of the quartz from the reefs to the mills is improved, and proper gold-saving machinery introduced, it is fully expected that the profits will be considerably in-

creased, as the yield of gold will certainly be greater, when subjected to more economical, careful, and scientific treatment. From all parts of South Africa men are turning their eyes, and hazarding their chances on the glittering possibilities of the Barberton and Sheba reefs. Numerous mining companies have already been formed, with an aggregate capital of about three-fourths of a million, and new ones are being quickly added. Barberton, consisting two years ago of one small building, has now over 300 houses, 4 hotels, a club-house in course of erection, a share exchange, 2 banks, and a newspaper. The climate on the uplands is healthy throughout the whole year, but in the valleys fever prevails from December to March. The reefs discovered near Pretoria, and those near Mafeking, in Bechuanaland, have not yet been developed. The finds at Knysna, in Cape Colony, have not been very extensive. From all accounts, it seems that, if the proportion of gold per ton is maintained, South Africa will be the richest gold-producing country in the world, and will soon be recognised as the veritable El Dorado.

Zululand is no more. Since the Zulu war, it has been in a pitiable state of disorder. Whatever may be thought of the cause and motive of that war, its results have been far from satisfactory or flattering to us. Cetewayo was dethroned, after being punished for his hostile intentions, if such he had; was held captive near Cape Town; brought to England, where his presence seems to have excited a capricious remorse; sent back to his own country, and reinstated as king of a part of it—Usibepu obtaining possession of the rest; quarreled with his neighbour, and sought to wrest his portion from him; was defeated, and died shortly after, a fugitive in the Reserve. Then his son's friends took up the quarrel; invited the Boers to help them; crushed the enemy; and found themselves in the hard grasp of men

who knew well how, in the midst of native disturbances, to make a bargain for their own advantage. Hence the Republic of Eugenia. Now we have come to an arrangement with them to divide the spoil—we annexing a considerable part, they retaining the most of what they claim as theirs by right of arrangement with the natives. Surely immediate annexation after the war would have been as honourable and more profitable both to Briton and Black than thus allowing matters to shape themselves and then accepting the inevitable. We may blame the natives for squabbling, the Boers for grabbing—but our own want of firm foresight is at the root of the mischief. There is only one of two alternatives—to the Zambesi, or remain persistently and consistently where you are!!

In Cape politics the question will force itself forward—especially at any time of convulsion, however slight—What is it to be? The *status quo*, a republic, or a confederation of states? Will Britain march onward to the Zambesi, or continue to hesitate and disappoint her loyal subjects, impatiently asks one party—the men of the Empire League? Or is Mr. Hofmeyr and the Africander party to have the shaping of Southern Africa's future by the realisation of their dream of a united South African Republic? Or is confederation under English regime possible? Or is the present system of many states, where there should be one, to continue? This last seems the most likely, for the opportunity is past, it is to be feared, of uniting Dutch and English. Time and charity will do much, and it always comes to the necessity of accepting events in the long run. We should at anyrate hold our own and improve it. We have not only Boers, but a Bismarck to reckon with. Angra Pequena nestles under the old eagle of Germany. Long may it be so, but at the same time it may not cross our path into the interior, and

shut us off from the Zambesi and beyond. Why should our Government not be extended to that natural limit, when the Bechuanaland Protectorate brings us within easy distance? This is the desire of many who have the interests of enlightened government in South Africa at heart. The best slice of Africa we have already, at all events. Fools, if we neglect it.

All Europe has lately been turning its gaze to that huge, mysterious continent. Again it is the scene of the heroic attempts of the indefatigable Stanley, and a mighty European state has been formed in the very heart of it. Around its seaboard, portions, more or less large, have been affected by foreign government, missions, and trade. And yet how little has been colonised compared with the vast whole that still lies in a rude state. What shall it be 100 years hence? The happy scene of an advanced civilisation, if developed like its southern end, which is able in this Jubilee Year to celebrate, in common with many parts of the Empire, the immense progress which it has made during the fifty years' reign of our Gracious Sovereign. Worse almost than barbarism, if like the Portuguese settlement at Delagoa Bay, from which, if they would depart, they would do both Europe and Africa a great favour. May only the healthy life of the north be transported to the south! It will be so, if Britain and Germany dominate. The civilisation of France and Italy want the freshness and energy of these.

And has South Africa, in particular, a future before it? Certainly, and a splendid one, if one were only to judge from the possibilities contained in its position at the centre of the world, its lovely climate, its fertile soil, its magnificent mountains, its vast plains, its fine race of people, and its past advance.

FINIS.



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